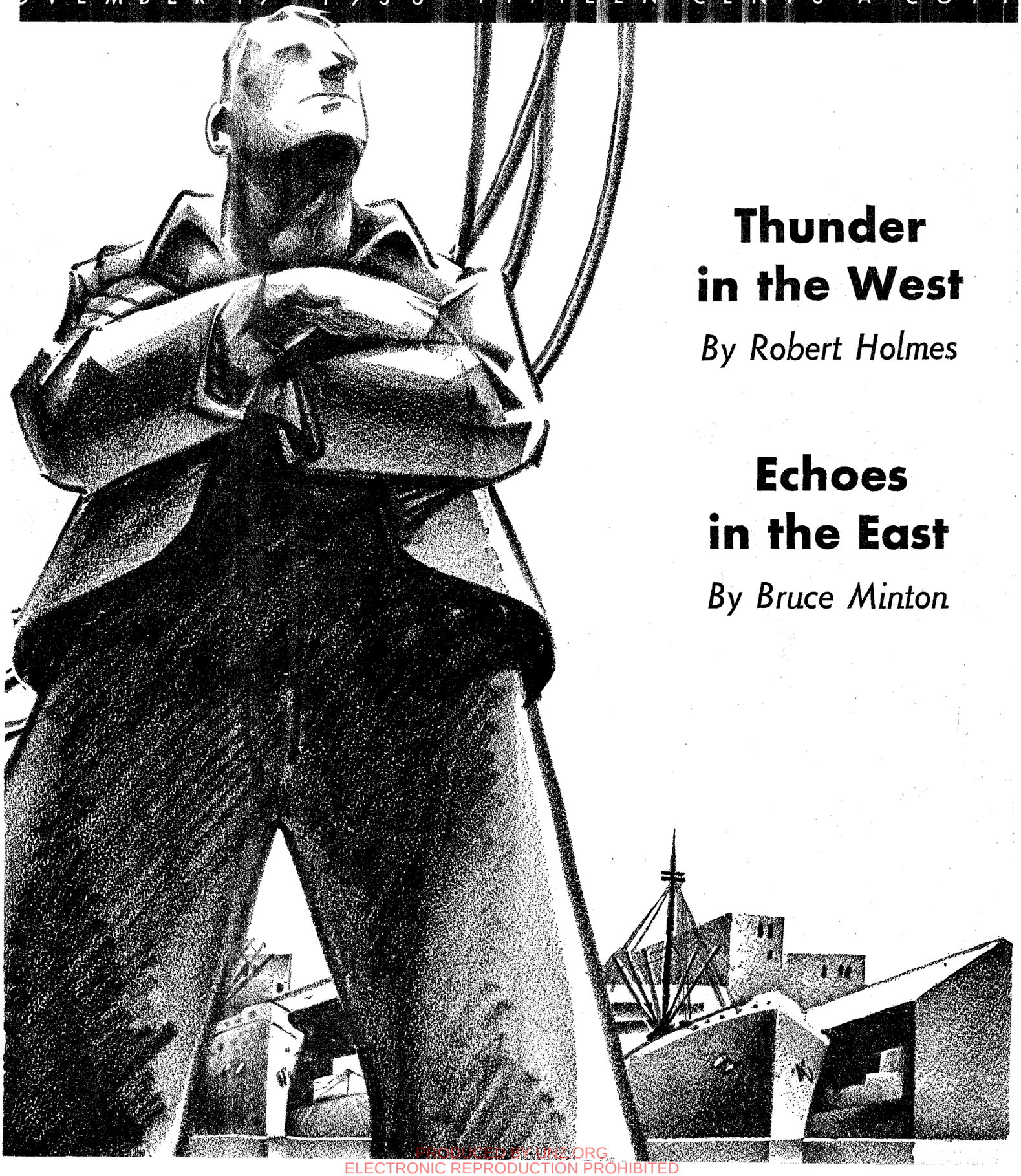
'E MEANING OF THE ELECTIONS An Editorial

NEW MASSES

OVEMBER 17 1936 FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY



Thunder in the West

By Robert Holmes

Echoes in the East

By Bruce Minton

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BETWEEN OURSELVES

OUR twenty-fifth anniversary issue, date of December 15, is going to be a honey, apart from being the largest issue (64 pages) and the one having the largest press run (100,000 copies) in our history. Editor Bruce Minton, who is devoting himself exclusively to this special number, reports manuscripts already in from Rex Stout,

Sherwood Anderson, Upton Sinclair, Sarah N. Cleghorn, Albert Maltz, and Louis Untermeyer. Definite promises have been received from the following: Edna St. Vincent Millay (look alive, you Millay first-edition collectors!), Jack Conroy, William Rose Benét, Theodore Dreiser, John Howard Lawson, Albert Halper, Lynd Ward, Boardman Robinson (there's an old-timer many will be glad to see back in our pages!), Ben Benn, Wanda Gág, and others. Another two or three score more will be heard from during the next couple of weeks.

Meanwhile, what are you doing to see that those friends of yours who should be reading the NEW MASSES are introduced through this special number? All you have to do is send us one buck and ten names and addresses and we'll see that they get it. Two bucks, of course, will send the special issue to twenty people who ought to be getting wise to themselves.

Jack Conroy, by the way, who wrote *The Disinherited,* sent the following telegram to the recent banquet of the Committee of Professional Groups for Browder and Ford:

"The intellectual liberals are bothered and indecisive, like Helen Thurso in Robinson Jeffers's *Thurso's Landing,* who says to her husband's brother: 'Oh, Mark, tell me what's good. I don't know which way to turn. Is there anything good? Whisper, whisper! That mold of hard beef and bone never asks. He never wonders, took it ready made when he was a baby; never changes, can't change. You and I have to wonder at the world and stand between choices. That's why we're weak and ruled. If we could ever find out what's good, we'd do it.'

"There is an instinctive hatred of fascism in the breasts of most Americans. I stood a few weeks ago in the cheap rooming-house section of St. Louis watching the parade of the 'Veiled Prophet,' with floats representing various nations, pass by. All the floats were gaudy and in bad taste, and the throng looked at them with silent apathy. Then the German float, decorated with swastikas, came by, and a subterranean booing, mounting to a

bitter crescendo, swept along the packed sidewalks.

"If we are to be spared the hell of fascism, this hatred must be canalized, forged into the invincible sword of a people's front. It requires strong voices like those of Earl Browder and James W. Ford, to rally the affirmers of life against death, war, and reaction."

Who's Who

ROBERT HOLMES is the Californian who wrote the story on the Salinas lettuce strike in our issue of October 6.

Ralph Fox is a young Englishman who wrote a well-known life of Lenin and, more recently, *Genghis Khan.*

The lithograph by Eugene C. Fitsch on page 18 is from the first edition of the First Annual Print Series of the American Artists' School, New York. Anton Refregier's lithograph on page 5 of last week's issue was from the second edition of the same series. Mr. Refregier was one of the founders and is now a member of the Board of Control of the school.

Sterling A. Brown is the author of *Southern Road,* a book of verse. He has a second volume nearing completion.

Charles Wedger is an authority on South America whose work has appeared in the NEW MASSES and elsewhere.

Bernard Corey is a newcomer to our pages.

Walter Wilson is a former soldier whose writings have appeared frequently in the NEW MASSES and other liberal and left-wing journals. He is the author of *Forced Labor in the United States,* a book on the militia, and his pamphlet on the American Legion and civil liberties has been issued by the American League Against War and Fascism.

James Agee is a poet whose book, *Permit Me Voyage,* received a warm response.

Crockett Johnson is art editor of the NEW MASSES.

The drawing by Herb Kruckman on page 23 is from his book, *Hol' Up Yo' Head,* published by the Pitel Press. It is on view at the A. C. A. Gallery New York.

Stuart Greene is a Marxist scholar who has contributed reviews for us on previous occasions.

What's What

THE opening gun in the celebration of our twenty-fifth anniversary will be fired the night of Sunday, December 13, at a gala reunion of writers, artists, and readers of the old *Masses,* the *Liberator,* and the NEW MASSES at Mecca Temple, New York. Better get your reservation in now in accordance with the ad on page 29.

Occasionally the defense of constitutional liberties and workers' rights strikes close home. Jack Conroy's story in this issue involves such a case, where a writer was fired from the Federal Writers' Project for doing an article for the NEW MASSES on his own time. Let Federal W. P. A. Administrator Harry Hopkins hear your protests on this in the form of letters and telegrams to his office in Washington.

Readers in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn will be glad to hear that there's another place to get the NEW MASSES in that section. A new unit of the People's Bookshop chain is opening at 220 Utica Avenue.

William E. Browder, business manager of the NEW MASSES, will speak on Trotskyism at the Patrick Henry Club, 225 West 14th Street, New York, at 8 p. m., Tuesday, November 17.

Isidor Schneider, literary editor of the NEW MASSES, will deliver the first regular lecture in the 1936 series of the League of American Writers at Irving Plaza, New York, Monday evening, November 16. His subject will be "Whose Bad Taste?" a study of cultural levels under capitalism.

Flashbacks

AS King Edward VIII grows independent, demanding an eight-hour day and week-ends-with-Wally for overtime, Egyptian students and workers grimly mark November 13, the anniversary of last year's Independence Day demonstrations against British rule. Imperial police killed four who paraded for national freedom, wounded 300. . . . Nearer to Regent's Park, where four-foot baskets of red roses appear advertising the king's masculinity, one of his majesty's subjects, witty Willy Gallacher, made the headlines while his first year as a Communist M.P. drew to a close. "I see no reason why the king shouldn't marry Mrs. Simpson if he wishes," he said. "It's no offense to be American." . . . Seeking territory of greater strategic importance, the Chinese Red Army began its historic trek from Suikin to Szechuan two years ago. The time chosen for the beginning of this three-thousand-mile maneuver, November 12, was the birthday of Sun Yat-sen, Chinese revolutionary. . . . While Russian workers were facing bullets in their struggle for political control, American women faced jail in their struggle for ballots. Thirty-one suffragettes who picketed liberal Woodrow Wilson on November 13, 1917, were arrested, some of them for the second time in two days, and were refused bail. In court they received sentences ranging from six days to six months.

THIS WEEK

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NEW MASSES
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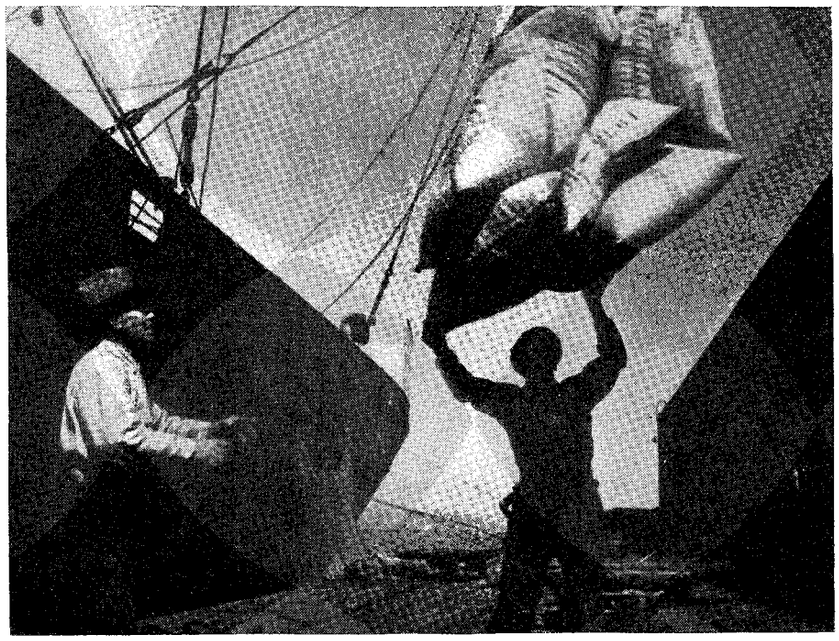

Courtesy, *Voice of the Federation*

Thunder in the West

Determined to defend its hard-won gains against the employers' onslaught, the maritime federation hears rumblings of violence

By Robert Holmes

STRIKE! The order went out just after midnight, October 30. Immediately 39,000 longshoremen and maritime workers walked out. From San Diego to Alaska and from San Francisco to Honolulu, stevedores, sailors, firemen, marine cooks and stewards, marine engineers, masters and mates, and radio men responded to the unanimous strike vote of the Maritime Federation of the Pacific Joint Negotiating Committee.

More than 150 ships lie anchored in western ports, and each day witnesses the tying up of every boat that docks. Nearly fifty ships ride the waters of San Francisco Bay. The harbor takes on the appearance of those grim, urbulent days of 1934. The huge steel doors of pier sheds along the Frisco Embarcadero are closed. Truck drivers have deserted the waterfront; last week all unmoved goods on the docks was declared "hot cargo." The 'front is strangely still and only occasional automobiles move along the Embarcadero, abandoned except for small groups of pickets and police. Both sides wait while employers and strikers jockey for position. The quiet is ominous, a prelude to the storm which, if it comes, will by comparison make the bloody battle of 1934 seem rather pale.

The owners as yet have made no efforts to bring in strikebreakers or armed guards, but they will move into action with all the resources they command if this strike is not settled within ten days. Already 200 police, equipped with radio patrol cars, have been detailed to the San Francisco waterfront. Central telephonic communications have been established in the Ferry building by city, state, and police officials. Mayor Angelo Rossi, messenger boy for the Dollar Line's Herbert Fleishhacker, has declared that a "state of emergency" exists, and has appointed Florence McAuliffe, reactionary attorney, to guard the "public interest." This uncalled-for action has been vigorously scored by the unions.

Outside the sailors' hall, duffel bags are piled high, giving the appearance of an encampment, perhaps a prophetic example of what this port may become. Both sides clear decks for action. In Los Angeles, labor-hating Chief of Police James Davis has dispatched 600 police to patrol the strike area. As in 1934, San Pedro remains the weak point in the coastwise strike, for the waterfront extends for miles and is difficult to picket. Los Angeles, historically an open-shop city, is a fertile area to recruit scabs. But now, in contrast to 1934, the teamsters are organized and have walked out in a sympathy strike.

In Portland, Mayor Joseph K. Carson, Jr., issued veiled threats in a statement that "law and order would be preserved." In Seattle, Mayor John F. Dore, influenced by the united labor stand in the Hearst *Post-Intelligencer* strike, has assured the workers of fair and impartial treatment.

How does the strike situation compare with that of 1934? The men are in an incomparably stronger position today. Already the position of the strikers during the first week equals that achieved only after sixty or seventy days in 1934. When the strike call went out ten days ago, every longshoreman and maritime worker joined the walkout. In 1934, men were still coming off the boats when the strike was nearly ended. Organization of the workers in this strike far surpasses anything known in the shipping industry's history. Port strike committees have been created around the various district councils of the Maritime Federation. A Pacific Coast Joint Strike Committee to direct the entire strike, lacking in 1934, has been set up. Unions which were penniless in 1934 now have in excess of a quarter of a million dollars in the strike chest. Relief and food kitchens have been established. A central, unified legal defense has been arranged. And last, the heroic longshore and maritime

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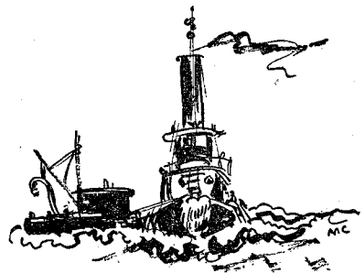
workers who have led the fight for labor on the West Coast during the past two years have rallied behind them the forces of all progressive, liberal, and labor groups. This vast public support has been achieved as a result of the militant, uncompromising record of the unions led by Harry Bridges, the man who has won union democracy for his fellow workers. Because he is incorruptible, unwavering in his fight for better conditions, because he has outsmarted the operators at every turn, he has earned their vitriolic hatred. To them, Harry Bridges represents organized labor, which they regard as an alliance of the devil with Moscow.

The Northwest illustrates the growth of workers' strength since 1934. There longshoremen and sailors organized timber workers and sawmill operators into an A.F. of L. union last year. These workers are thus removed as a possible source of strikebreakers and, more than that, constitute a second line of defense to aid the strike by sympathy action.

THE STRIKE was called only after all efforts at peace had failed. On September 30, the agreements under which longshoremen and marine crafts had worked for the past year expired. It soon became apparent to the unions that the shipowners did not intend to accept new agreements. The owners publicized terms on which they would enter into new agreements, terms which took away the concessions which the workers had fought for and won in the bloody battle of 1934. Failing settlement on these terms, the employers offered arbitration, which merely gave the owners a less direct although no less certain means of restoring pre-strike conditions, and acted as an entering wedge to disrupt the unions. The "impartial" arbitrator who has been interpreting the 1934 award in recent months has monotonously ruled in favor of the employers. The unions insisted on continued negotiations.

Employers prepared for a showdown. Led by the reactionary minority group composed of the Dollar Line's Herbert Fleishhacker and Stanley Dollar, the Matson Line's Hugh Gallagher, and the American-Hawaiian Line's arch reactionaries, T. G. ("Tear Gas") Plant and Roger Lapham, the shipowners planned a lockout on September 30. They instructed all customers to forward freight by rail or truck after that day, and arranged schedules so that only one ship cleared San Francisco on the thirtieth.

Edward F. McGrady, Assistant Secretary of Labor, and the newly appointed Maritime Commission, empowered under the Copeland Act to distribute one hundred million dollars in subsidies to operators, made an effort to avert a break. Unquestionably, the pressure they exerted on the employers forced them to agree to an extension until October 15. They accepted the commission's proposal that all existing agreements be renewed for the period of one year while that body investigated the maritime situation. The employers informed the commission that they held it responsible for settling the situation to the employers' satisfaction. Apparently that is what the commission promised, probably guaranteeing the shipowners that any increased labor costs they would incur as a result of coöperating with the commission would be made up in the form of subsidies. Nothing else could account for the employers' changed position, because on September 30 they were adamant in their program either to force their terms on the men or to declare a lockout.



M. Chisholm

Not once during the course of these conversations between employers and the commission was there any mention of protecting the unions. The workers accordingly notified the commission and operators that unless their fundamental demands were met by October 28, a strike would result. The demands of the seven striking unions, representing certain minimum conditions, are these:

Longshoremen: Retention of the present hiring hall, jointly operated with a union dispatcher, and retention of the six-hour day. These conditions were established by the arbitration award after the 1934 strike.

Sailors: Union hiring hall, and cash payment for overtime instead of time off as at present.

Marine Firemen, Oilers, Watertenders, and Wipers: Union hiring hall, and cash overtime.

Marine Cooks and Stewards: Union hiring hall, decent and habitable living quarters, and an eight-hour day within a stretch of twelve hours, instead of ten hours within a stretch of fifteen hours as at present.

Masters, Mates, and Pilots: Preference of employment, and cash overtime.

Marine Engineers: Preference of employment, and increased manning scale for ships which are at present understaffed.

Radio Telegraphists: Union hiring hall, eight-hour day, and radio men to do only radio watch duty, whereas at present operators do certain "paper work" in connection with the cargo.

All demands listed above can be granted by the shipowners. In fact, they were offered by Eastern and foreign operators who proposed retention of existing conditions for longshoremen, and, in addition, pay increases and preference of employment. The group preventing peace and directly responsible for the present strike are the West Coast offshore operators: Dollar, Matson, and American-Hawaiian. These companies will get huge subsidies, while the coastwise and foreign operators who are anxious and able to settle will naturally receive none. Yet the employers who will pilfer the government bitterly refuse to grant a single concession, and hold back the other companies from making peace.

All the shipowners have offered to make a separate peace with the longshoremen on the basis of existing agreements. The I.L.A. has steadfastly refused to be maneuvered into deserting the other unions. The longshoremen, led by Harry Bridges, realize the value of and imperative need for unwavering solidarity. They will not enter into a peace unless it is a peace granting all the unions their demands. Bridges accurately described the situation:

> The shipowners' offer to the I.L.A. is farcical. To offer the largest maritime union a chance to renew its present agreement when all shipping may be tied up after October 28 through the shipowners' refusal to correct the present low wages and intolerable conditions of the seafaring men, means nothing but another attempt of the shipowners to divide the ranks of the waterfront unions.

The longshoremen came out of the 1934 strike with greater gains than any of the other unions involved. Now the struggle is to win better conditions for the seafaring workers, the ordinary seamen, firemen, and cooks and stewards in particular.

Some of the conditions demanded, like the union hiring hall, now exist in practice. The men want the halls recognized. They are anxious to avoid a situation whereby control of the halls allows the shipowners to scream "violation of agreement." Furthermore, the men insist on the halls to avert any possibility of a blacklist with which they are all too familiar and which the employers perfected in the dark days before 1934.

The shipowners all agree that they must attempt to smash the unions sooner or later. If they wait any longer, the unions may become too strong. Yet some of the shipowners want peace. They are making money and realize that the unions are a force that they must recognize and deal with. So long as Dollar, Fleishhacker, Plant, and others dictate policy, however, only blood and bullets are certain.

If the strikers win this present fight, the Maritime Federation of the Pacific, composed of all the striking unions, will be established as a permanent body for the unification of West Coast longshoremen and maritime workers. It will be a powerful influence for the establishment of a national maritime federation that will fit importantly into the industrial organization of labor.

Tear gas and bullets and blood and all the force of the shipowners' wealth may visit the waterfront soon. The men who cheered Harry Bridges for many minutes at a longshoremen's mass meeting, who pledged to carry on the fight until it is won, are not easily licked. They are fighting for issues on which there can be no compromise.

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Echoes in the East

The leadership and rank and file of the maritime unions are sharply split on their reaction to the Pacific Coast strike

By Bruce Minton

IT IS not surprising to find the shipowners and the union officialdom raising the cry of "outlaw" strike in the East.

"A horrible situation wherein a group of unprincipled agitators can force their will upon decent men who wish to be allowed to continue to work," laments the president of the International Mercantile Marine Co. as he calls for an investigation. David E. Grange, third vice-president of the I.S.U., declares: "We are fighting for a principle, and that is that the American flag shall continue to fly over the merchant marine and not the red flag of Communism."

Not too original a statement, one that echoes the bombast of Joseph P. Ryan in 1934. But Grange backed it up by warning that he would put "armed, picked men" on the waterfront. He opened hiring halls, one directly opposite the Seamen's Defense Committee, where he provides union cards to thugs and strikebreakers just as he did in the spring. The rank and file took over the newly opened hall and temporarily prevented scab herding. Grange promises to try again. Safety at sea, menaced by untrained crews on the merchant marine, is forgotten.

The rank-and-file maritime workers on the Atlantic do not control their unions as their brothers do on the Pacific. Back in 1934, West Coast longshoremen and seamen shook themselves loose from corrupt leadership and substituted men with whom they worked side by side on docks and ships, men they knew would not make deals with the bosses or utilize their position to further personal ends. When Joseph P. Ryan, president of the International Longshoremen's Association, fled from the Coast during the 1934 strike, he had been completely repudiated and had lost the leadership of the West Coast longshoremen to Harry Bridges. Later, when Paul Scharrenberg, from what he considered the safety of entrenched officialdom, took up the fight against the membership, the seamen ejected him. He, too, left the Coast. The old bureaucracy lost out to the new, vigorous leadership that rose from the ranks.

But in the East, the revolt was slower. Ryan's stamping ground is New York City, where he has Tammany behind him and where his "gorillas" terrorize the longshoremen on the 'front. Similarly, the International Seamen's Union is dominated by a strong clique which, though repudiated by the membership, refuses to acknowledge as legal, elections which happen to be unfavorable to the old-line officials.

Last spring, seamen started housecleaning during their strike for West Coast conditions in eastern ports. They set up a rank-and-file strike committee, and despite expulsions of worker-leaders from the union, gradually extended the influence of their Seamen's Defense Committee. But it is not easy to shake off the bureaucrats once they have their feet under desks in union headquarters. The clique acts as custodian of the union constitution, which it "interprets" with the same cynical disregard of the interests of the majority as the nine Supreme Court justices show in declaring social legislation void. Grange, Olander, Hunter, Carlson, and the rest of the office holders in the seamen's union cling to their large-salaried sinecures and fight to protect "agreements" with shipowners; such agreements bring no benefit at all to seamen who work the boats, but prove personally remunerative to the officialdom. They can be sure of support from the owners and the government. East Coast seamen, as yet not sufficiently powerful to purge their union of the fakers, find themselves in a three-cornered battle against the shipowners, the government, and their own officials.

The employers provoked the present strike in the West—and ships lie idly beside the docks and in the stream. No cargo moves. But they hardly expected the walk-off that occurred in every major port along the Atlantic and the Gulf. How far this revolt will go can not as yet be predicted. After solemnly promising Harry Bridges full support to the Pacific district, Joseph P. Ryan backed down and now fights wildly to keep eastern longshoremen at work. Shrewdly, Ryan realizes that the example of the West Coast hints his eventual doom. His actions are calculated to keep eastern longshoremen isolated from the influence of Bridges, from that union democracy which will be his finish.

So far, Ryan has been successful. Not so the officials of the International Seamen's Union, who are unable to stop the spontaneous sit-down actions in New York City and other ports. Last spring, the union split. The Seamen's Defense Committee, with Joe Curran at its head, directed a strike action that divided the union into militants and those who through fear, inexperience, or misunderstanding followed the reactionary officials. This fall the split is dramatized by the stoppage of over fifty ships in New York, 179 ships in other Atlantic and Gulf ports. The present action is designed to exert further pressure on shipowners to settle the strike on the West Coast in a way satisfactory to the workers. And as the strike spreads, the seamen are raising their own demands for conditions comparable to those on the West Coast.

The workers have the same goal on each Coast: the expansion of the Maritime Federation to include not only the Pacific ports, but the Atlantic and Gulf ports as well. In essence, the longshoremen and maritime unions anticipate a struggle similar to that which will dominate the approaching A.F. of L. convention in Tampa. There the problem will be to achieve unity and democracy in the American labor movement.

A. Ajay

"I'll gas strikers if I damn please, Abbott. This is still a free country!"

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The Stakes at Tampa

Issues affecting trade-union unity as well as economic and political questions will be discussed at the A. F. of L. convention this week

By J. F. Miller

SOON the Packards and Buicks will be carrying tourists to Miami for the winter season. They will pass through the historic city of Tampa, and the tourists will stop to admire the blue bay and the bluer skies. Some of them may even have sufficient curiosity to visit the tobacco factories, and the Spanish colony at Ybor City, though few of them will grasp their real meaning. Fewer still will be aware that under their very noses in Tampa an important convention will be taking place.

But that convention will be watched eagerly by millions of workers throughout America. It will be watched, too, by millions of workers in all parts of the world. And not by workers alone. The economic crisis has made many professionals so acutely conscious of social problems that they will also devour reports of the fifty-sixth annual convention of the American Federation of Labor. The decisions of that convention will be as important for the Newspaper Guild as for the steel workers, for the Federation of Architects & Engineers as for the coal miners. This significance of the A.F. of L. convention in Tampa will lie in its power to determine the course of the American trade-union movement for the years immediately ahead of us.

Recent events have sharply illuminated the major problems confronting organized labor in this country. Workers of hand and brain want to know whether the reactionaries in the A.F. of L. will succeed in splitting the federation, or whether America will have a united trade-union movement. Perhaps a compromise will be effected. In that case, workers want to know on what basis unity will be reëstablished. Will the compromise be essentially a continuation of the old bankrupt policies? Will it be a continuation of the failure to organize the millions of the unorganized in the basic industries along the lines of industrial unionism? Or will real unity be established? Will the demands of the rank and file and the needs of the moment be met? Will the A.F. of L. actually achieve a unity based upon an energetic campaign in the entire trade-union movement to organize the unorganized, above all the steel workers?

These vital questions were the center of discussion at last year's A.F. of L. convention. Today they are symbolized by the division which has arisen within the Federation. Confronting each other with opposed programs are, on the one hand, the most reactionary elements in the A.F. of L. Council, and, on the other hand, the unions which have formed the Committee for Industrial Organization (C.I.O.).

At last year's convention, the reactionary elements controlled a bloc vote which did not actually express the sentiments of the vast majority of the rank and file. By this alleged majority these elements defeated measures designed to bring millions of unorganized workers in the mass production industries into the American Federation of Labor. Today it is obvious that these so-called majorities settled nothing. Immediately following the fifty-fifth convention, John L. Lewis, Sidney Hillman, and their followers vigorously expressed dissatisfaction with the fight around the resolutions. It is to their credit that they at once took steps to initiate the campaign to organize the unorganized. It was this step, even more than the stand they took at last year's A.F. of L. convention, which earned for the C.I.O. unions the progressive position which they now occupy in the American labor movement.

The vast majority of the rank and file greeted with enthusiasm the actual work begun by the C.I.O. unions in organizing the unorganized and strengthening the A.F. of L. And just as that important work was begun, the A.F. of L. Council found excuses for suspending the ten unions affiliated with the C.I.O., containing over a million members.

J. A. Cornin

To grasp the full extent of the Council's treachery it is necessary to remember just when the ten C.I.O. unions were suspended. That suspension came immediately after the C.I.O. began to organize the steel industry. What was the C.I.O.'s "crime"? It worked energetically to enroll the workers in the steel industry into the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel, and Tin Workers (A.A.). This is one of the oldest A.F. of L. organizations; it holds a charter which entitles it to bring the steel workers into its fold. By decision of the last convention of the A.A., the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee was formed. The S.W.O.C. was made up of unions which pledged their support to the A.A. There was nothing to prevent any union in the A.F. of L. or any A.F. of L. official from rendering such support; there was absolutely nothing to prevent them from becoming associated with the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee.

The reactionaries in the A.F. of L. Council said they objected to the form of the steel campaign and to its leadership. What they really objected to was the very attempt to organize the steel workers. They did not want new millions of workers to enter the A.F. of L. They were afraid that such an influx from the basic industries would challenge their harmful leadership and their disastrous policies. Did not the A.F. of L. Council have innumerable opportunities of its own to undertake a steel campaign? Yet it did nothing in the historic struggle of 1919, or in the years 1933-4, when about 100,000 steel workers joined the A.A. On the contrary, it did everything possible to hamper those campaigns. In 1933-4 the A.F. of L. Council collaborated with the reactionary leadership of the A.A., then headed by Mike Tighe, to disrupt the attempts at organizing the steel industry. These elements went in for strike-breaking. They urged the workers to rely upon government boards instead of relying upon the organized strength of the workers. Later, the A.F. of L. chiefs had another chance to assume the leadership in organizing the steel workers. The San Francisco convention of the A.F. of L. adopted a decision specifically calling for the organization of the industry. And again *nothing was done.*

In the light of these facts, the suspension of the C.I.O. unions can only signify the unwillingness of the reactionary leaders within the Council to do anything about steel. That suspension aroused the rank and file to protest and resistance. The Council was flooded with thousands of protest resolutions from local unions. Some of these were leading locals of the big craft unions such as the carpenters and the machinists, whose leaders had voted for suspension. Almost all of the central labor bodies which acted on this question condemned the suspension and demanded the reinstatement of the C.I.O. unions. This was true, also, of the state federations of labor and international unions, which met in convention.

Obviously the A.F. of L. Council did not expect such overwhelming opposition. Hence the Council's decision to refrain from ousting the locals of the suspended unions from the central bodies and the state federations of labor. This was a substantial preliminary vic-

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William Sanderson

"He keeps tellin' me about this auto show and prosperity. So I says, 'O.K. I'll take a Duesenberg.'"

tory for the progressive forces. By this step, the rank and file unequivocally expressed its desire for unity. For the moment it has blocked a conclusive split in the trade-union movement. This victory is all the more significant in the light of the tactics pursued by the C.I.O. leaders. For reasons which are, to say the least, debatable, they did little to fight the suspensions by mobilizing the support of the rank and file. The failure of the C.I.O. to popularize sufficiently the demand for unity enabled the A.F. of L. Council to confuse many workers in the craft unions. The C.I.O. could easily have made it clear that its policies would not destroy the craft unions—the building trades, for example. On the contrary, these policies would help the craft unions to raise and maintain their wage standards and working conditions. Had the C.I.O. made this vital point unmistakably clear, it could have maintained greater initiative in the fight for the unity of the A.F. of L. It would then have been much easier for everyone to see that the responsibility for the threatened split in the federation lay squarely upon the shoulders of such A.F. of L. bureaucrats as Hutcheson.

If anyone imagines that these are surface issues of technical concern only to the A.F. of L., let him consider the general social situation out of which arose the conflict over industrial unions and the organization of the unorganized. Numerous speakers at last year's A.F. of L. convention touched upon the central issue which confronts the trade-union movement, as it confronts the American people as a whole. The need for trade-union unity, for organization of the unorganized, always a necessity, has now become imperative in the face of growing reaction, of the trend toward fascism. John L. Lewis had this in mind when he said at last year's convention: "We are all disturbed by reason of the changes and the hazards in our economic situation and as regards our own political security. There are forces at work in this country that would wipe out, if they could, the labor movement of America, just as it was wiped out in Germany or just as it was wiped out in Italy. There are those of us who believe that the best security against that menace . . . is a more comprehensive and more powerful labor movement."

This consciousness of the growing danger of fascism was expressed by the labor movement during the past year on an unprecedented scale. One expression was the overwhelming support which trade unionists gave the C.I.O. Another was the consistent fight which American trade unions have conducted against the fascist trend. Three major aspects of this fight have been the campaign against Hearst, the support given to the Spanish people in their struggle against the fascist rebellion, and the growing movement for independent political action by labor.

Another significant factor in this respect has been the almost complete absence of Red-baiting and Red scares at the conventions of A.F. of L. trade unions and central labor bodies. Indeed, many of these unions have begun to grasp the progressive role of the Communists in the labor movement. This was openly expressed, for instance, in the resolution adopted by the International Rubber Workers' convention. The activities of the C.I.O., particularly its campaign to organize steel, have made American labor more conscious of its role and its tasks in the present moment. And the growing political consciousness of labor has contributed to the mass support of the progressive elements as against the reactionaries within the American Federation of Labor.

It is in this historic setting that the Tampa convention meets. There can be no question that the rank and file wants the reëstablishment of unity in the A.F. of L. To meet this demand, there will be those who, like the old-guard Socialists led by Louis Waldman and Abe Cahan, will urge "unity at any price." That "price" would be the abandonment of organizing the unorganized in the mass-production industries; it would involve crushing the movement toward industrial unionism; it would prevent real unity. On the other hand, there will be those who, like many of the present leaders of the Socialist Party, will urge complete separation from the A.F. of L. and the building of a new labor federation. This, too, would destroy the possibility of real unity; for this policy of separation, like the policy of "unity at any price," is based upon lack of faith in the rank and file. The Communists reject both these erroneous positions. They want real unity in the A.F of L. They believe that such unity can be based only upon the guarantee that the campaign to organize the unorganized will be carried through and that the principle of industrial unionism will guide the organization of the mass-production industries. The Communist Party fights for unity by rallying the rank and file for these policies, for only thus can the necessary changes in the A.F. of L. be achieved.

The Communists are always the champions of the unity of labor. Today that unity is more important than ever in order to defeat reaction, to build the people's front against fascism. Here a united labor movement can and must play a leading role. For this reason, the most progressive Americans in every walk of life will watch the Tampa convention.

Unity will be the major, but not the sole problem the delegates will have to solve. Many trade unionists, like many progressives in other fields, are seriously thinking of a national farmer-labor party. A movement for such a party is already under way. If the Tampa convention is to contribute toward such a movement, it cannot confine itself to general declarations for a labor party. The experience of the recent elections, the expressed wishes of large sections of the American people, the very situation in which this country now finds itself, all dictate something more positive. The A.F. of L. ought now to make a definite declaration for independent political action; it ought to take steps to stimulate the support and the development of all genuine local and state labor and farmer-labor parties. It ought to coöperate in taking steps toward the calling of a nation-wide conference in time to put a national farmer-labor party in the field for the 1938 elections as a first great rehearsal for the campaign of 1940.

This would be one effective step which the Tampa convention could take in the fight of the American people against the growing dangers of fascism and war. Another important step would be to take measures for mobilizing the workers of this country in support of the Spanish people who are fighting for lives and liberties against the armed hordes of fascism. In this progressive spirit, the Tampa convention ought also to abolish all kinds of discrimination in the A.F. of L. against Negro workers. This would be one more imperative step which American labor must take in its struggle toward real unity and real progress.

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Russell T. Limbach

TIED UP!

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Covering the events of the week ending November 9

"A HARD BLOW to the reactionary forces" was the way the Communist Party's Central Committee summed up the 1936 presidential election. The tidal wave that washed out the candidates of William Randolph Hearst, of Father Coughlin, of finance capital's Liberty League, of the most reactionary and fascist-minded men of the United States, left small room for quarrel with the modest comment of the Communists. In a few weeks 531 electors will solemnly cast their votes for the next President of the United States. Eight of them will name Alf Landon, already a blurred and faded figure; 523 will choose Franklin D. Roosevelt, who will thereby chalk up the highest electoral percentage since Monroe swept the country in 1820.

Riding high on the Roosevelt tide, twenty-seven Democratic nominees for governor sailed into office in a total of thirty-four state elections for that office. Even budget-balanced Kansas elected a Democrat to succeed Alf Landon. Of the remaining seven, three victories went to Non-Partisan William Langer (N. D.), Progressive Philip La Follette (Wis.), and Farmer-Laborite Elmer Benson (Minn.). A more thoroughly one-party House was elected than the country has known since 1855. The complexion of the Senate (the most solidly one-party since 1869) will be: 74 Democrats, 17 Republicans, 1 Independent, 2 Farmer-Laborites; the House: 335 Democrats, 88 Republicans, 5 Farmer-Laborites, 7 Progressives. Buried in the landslide were such stalwart reactionaries as Senators Dickinson (Ia.), Hastings (Del.), Metcalfe (R. I.), and Barbour (N. J.). Victim of a neat bit of Republican double-crossing, progressive Representative Marcantonio vowed to abandon the G.O.P., even technically, and to run henceforth as a Farmer-Laborite.

IN the presidential vote both Communist and Socialist Parties suffered losses as compared with 1932. The Communist drop was due almost solely to the defection of many Communist sympathizers who were so determined to defeat the extreme reactionaries that they refused to take a chance by not voting for Roosevelt. This factor was clearly shown by the vote in New York. While presidential candidate Browder received between thirty and thirty-five thousand votes, Communist candidates for lower offices, unaffected by voters' fears of a possible Landon victory, received upwards of 64,000 votes. Comparing this figure with the 24,000 New York votes given to Foster in 1932, the Communists had good reason to feel encouraged despite the technical loss of a place on the ballot. Communist leaders were determined to make war on the law which increased the ballot requirement to 50,000 votes for the candidate for governor, though they foresaw no difficulty in restoring the party to the ballot by petition. In its elimination from the ballot the Communist Party was not alone. Republicans in Florida will likewise have to round up signatures to win official recognition in their next campaign.

While the Communists recorded their substantial increase in the actual party vote, the Socialist Party suffered a drop of calamitous proportions. From a nation-wide vote of 884,781 in 1932, the Thomas strength dropped to a probable maximum of 150,000. This loss of something like 83 percent of its 1932 presidential vote was attributed to fundamental splits in the party rather than to individual defections to the Roosevelt camp, and to the strong showing of the American Labor Party in New York State. Succeeding in electing two Congressmen in normally Republican districts and in polling as high as 300,000 votes in the State, the A.L.P. gave promise of becoming a major factor in American politics. Particularly gratifying to its members was the defeat of Rep. Horace M. Stone, bitter anti-laborite, at the hands of A.L.P.-endorsed Francis McElroy, who was active in the Remington-Rand strike.

The smashing defeat of the reactionary forces induced a groveling kind of surrender on the part of Roosevelt's bitterest foes. With Lemke completely routed and Coughlin's National Union for Social Justice revealed as an insignificant factor in the elections, the Detroit priest decided, for the present, to abandon the fight. Admitting that his organization was "thoroughly discredited," Coughlin announced suspension of its activities "until there is again a demand from the people" and announced that he was "hereby withdrawing from all radio activity in the best interests of all the people." Almost as abject was William Randolph Hearst, who two days after the election decided that while Roosevelt policies might have been "dictatorial in manner and method," they were "democratic in essence."

While uniform satisfaction with the outcome of the elections was reported from foreign capitals, the depth of enthusiasm in Berlin and Rome was open to question. Particularly was this true of the German capital, since Nazi organizations in America had worked all through the campaign for the election of Landon. Fascist commentators sought solace in the democratic victory by finding, paradoxically, a totalitarian spirit in America's mass repudiation of fascist tendencies. In France, where hopes are entertained that Roosevelt will increase American coöperation in world peace efforts, the trouncing of the Republicans heartened supporters of the anti-fascist People's Front. A government spokesman went so far as to acclaim Roosevelt "democracy's new chief." Government circles in Mexico were justifiably relieved at the election returns, which correspondingly pained American oil and mining operators who had looked to Landon for a sterner policy toward Mexico's progressive administration. Most dubious of the compliments paid the President, considering the source, came from Getulio Vargas, Brazilian dictator, who hailed the election as a "democratic example."

WHILE it was too early to tell just what effect the landslide would have on Roosevelt's second administration, there was every indication that the President would start out with at least a conciliatory attitude toward big business. Assurances pointing in that direction came from General Johnson and from Secretary of Commerce Roper. Roosevelt himself announced his intention of balancing the budget, a step which business interests have demanded even at the expense of unemployment relief.

On the other hand, promise was held out for a constitutional amendment to permit broader social legislation. A new N.R.A., providing for minimum wages and maximum hours, was definitely in the wind, and also a restoration of government crop control of the sort contained in the outlawed A.A.A.

In its fight to bring pressure on the administration to live up to its mandate for social legislation the Communist Party may at least count on its constitutional right of free speech if American Legion Commander Colmery has his way. In the most liberal statement that ever issued from a national Legion commander, Colmery denounced the treatment of Earl Browder at Terre Haute and Tampa and declared: "The time has come for the American Legion to give serious thought to our traditional Americanism. . . . The convention mandate which directs us to oppose Communism makes it equally mandatory upon us also to oppose fascism and Hitlerism."

First major item on the administration agenda following the election was the dispatching of delegates to the Inter-American Peace Conference at Buenos Aires. Along with them went 5,000,000 signatures, collected in this country by the People's Mandate to End War, urging the conference to take constructive peace action. With more hope perhaps than accuracy, Roosevelt declared as the delegation left: "The Americas stand forth as an example of international solidarity, coöperation, and mutual helpfulness." But from South America came more than one dissident note. The Chaco Peace Conference, in which Bolivia and Paraguay have been deadlocked for over five months, was reported on the verge of disruption. Five hundred soldiers of Ecuador were said to have entered Peruvian territory in a fresh eruption of a long-standing border dispute. Ominous was the warning of the New York *Times* to the

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delegates that their primary duty was to prepare for the "possible breakdown of the orderly process of government" in Latin America by leaving the door open for United States intervention.

The delegates got off to a sour start when, flanked by police, they broke through a picket line to reach the scab liner *American Legion*. Secretary Hull was reported to have been greatly unnerved by the experience and to have pleaded that he had no knowledge that the ship was affected by the strike. His protestations were not convincing, however, since the press had carried stories two days before about the concern felt in the State Department over the possibility of sending the delegation on a ship manned by strikebreakers.

Whatever the extent of Hull's knowledge, the rest of the country was acutely aware of the spreading maritime strike. On the West Coast the strike settled down to a bitter deadlock, with employers blocking all negotiations. Further support was assured the strikers by the walkout of eleven crafts of shipyard workers in San Francisco. Eastern and Gulf seamen extended their sympathy sit-down action to a general strike for the same wages and conditions that the western workers are trying to protect. (For details see pages 3 and 5.)

ONE week before the scheduled A.F. of L. convention, steel corporations announced a 10-percent wage rise. Two factors entered into the decision, which some observers believe had been withheld to grace a possible Landon victory. One was the revelation that the C.I.O. had in its short existence enrolled more than 82,000 steel workers in the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel, & Tin Workers. "The wage increases were inevitable anyway," said C.I.O. organizer Philip Murray, "in a last belated attempt to keep workers from our organization by giving this miserable pittance." The second factor was the desire of the steel czars to freeze the wage scale to the cost-of-living index, thus preventing the workers from ever materially bettering their relative position. This policy, said John L. Lewis, would tie the workers "forever and always to the present unequal relationship between wages and the cost of living." Moreover, he insisted, the wage maneuver attempted to "mislead the steel workers and the public to believe that they [the corporations] are bargaining collectively with their employees." The proposed rise would mean an average increase of $78 a year per worker, whereas dividends simultaneously declared amounted to $3.75 a share. With many thousands of shares in the hands of major stockholders, the dividends constituted a bonus to the wealthy far out of proportion to the pay rise.

The C.I.O., meeting a week in advance of the A.F. of L., rejected the offer of the latter's executive council to appoint a committee of three to negotiate with a similar C.I.O. committee. Instead, it suggested direct negotiation between Green and Lewis as the most immediate way to heal the breach. Such a discussion, however, said the C.I.O., could take place only after the illegally suspended unions were reinstated and on the basis of a continued drive to organize mass-production industries. The C.I.O. announced the affiliation of two more large unions—the United Electrical & Radio Workers, with 33,000 members, and the Marine & Shipbuilding Workers, with 10,000 members. (For detailed account see page 6.)

Mackey

"My Union was thoroughly discredited."

THE astounding resistance of Madrid's defenders kept pace during the week with the mounting danger that the city would fall before the fascist invaders. So acute did the danger become that the seat of government was removed to Valencia. But after two days of continuous effort by Franco's columns to blast an entrance into the capital from their positions across the Manzanares River, all strategic bridgeheads were still in the hands of the government and the fascists were no closer to their goal. Thirty-five thousand well-armed militiamen blocked the southern approach to inner Madrid.

Of great portent, regardless of its immediate scope, was a disclosure, reported "authoritatively" by the United Press, of sabotage within the fascist ranks. In a cable from Madrid, the U.P. attributed partly to this cause the large number of shells which landed in the capital and failed to explode. According to the U.P. report, "A bit of paper found in the nose of one of these shells said: 'While I am an artilleryman not a single shell fired by me will explode.' "

Madrid's crisis failed to move Léon Blum, who, at the Socialist National Council meeting in Paris, defended his government's blockade against the Spanish republic. Under violent pressure from left-wing Socialists, who demanded that France immediately withdraw from the non-intervention pact, Blum hedged in his stand, offering to abandon the blockade if Britain did likewise. The council thereupon resolved to request that the French government "endeavor to reach an agreement with Great Britain giving effect to the resolution adopted by the Second International." This resolution, adopted October 27, stated: "The common duty of the working class of all countries . . . is to achieve by their own action, both on public opinion and on their own governments . . . the reëstablishment of complete commercial freedom for the Spanish Republic. . . ." Blum's maneuver made the carrying through of this resolution contingent on the all-too-predictable policy which British diplomacy will pursue toward democratic Spain.

Standing in review on Moscow's Red Square, twenty-one Spanish workers, delegates to the nineteenth anniversary celebration of Russia's October Revolution, found themselves the object of homage on the part of the millions who demonstrated in the streets of the Soviet capital. Citizens of the U.S.S.R. rejoiced in the gains of Socialist industry—gains which have brought industrial production to a level five times as high as that of 1928—and in the triumph of mechanized agriculture, which has just yielded a splendid harvest despite unfavorable weather conditions. The imminent adoption of the new Soviet constitution was a further cause for celebration. But dominating the holiday was the note of solidarity with republican Spain. In this spirit came greetings from Premier Largo Caballero and Foreign Minister Del Vayo, in which the Spanish officials acknowledged the Soviet Union's solitary efforts to free Spanish democracy from the blockade imposed upon it by the spurious neutrality agreement.

THE approach of a three-power parley between Austria, Italy, and Hungary, and with it a threatened snarl over Hungary's demands for boundary revision, again brought Central Europe to the fore as a potential war zone. Despite the much-publicized Italo-German protocol, elements of friction between the two fascist countries over the spoils of Central Europe and the Balkans remained. Temporary setbacks suffered by pro-Nazi groups in the Bulgarian and Rumanian governments indicated that Italian influence was growing in these countries. They also reflected the growing unpopularity of the Nazi "clearing" system, which forces Yugo-Slavia, Rumania, and Bulgaria to pay exorbitant prices for German exports if they are to thaw the credits they granted so light-heartedly to Dr. Schacht.

On the eve of Nazi festivities commemorating Hitler's "Beer Hall putsch," Edgar André, noted German trade unionist and writer, met death on the headsman's block. André, who was imprisoned in 1930, had been condemned to death on July 10. He was rushed to his execution shortly after Harry Schmidt, the state's chief witness against him, retracted his testimony. The execution deepened concern abroad over the fate of Ernst Thaelmann, and in England an outburst of popular feeling at André's death was directed against Hitler's envoy, Von Ribbentrop. Demands were made to expel the newly appointed ambassador, who has already tried to stir up anti-Communist sentiment in England.

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The Meaning of the Elections

Besides being a "mandate," the landslide was a demand for things that won't come automatically

An Editorial

THE presidential campaign which has just closed, the bitterest in many decades, resulted in a severe setback to the tories. Perhaps Jim Farley, who on the eve of the election granted the Republicans only two states, was not surprised by the final outcome; the Republicans certainly were, and our guess is that Roosevelt himself did not expect quite this overwhelming plurality. Neither he nor his political astrologers predicted it.

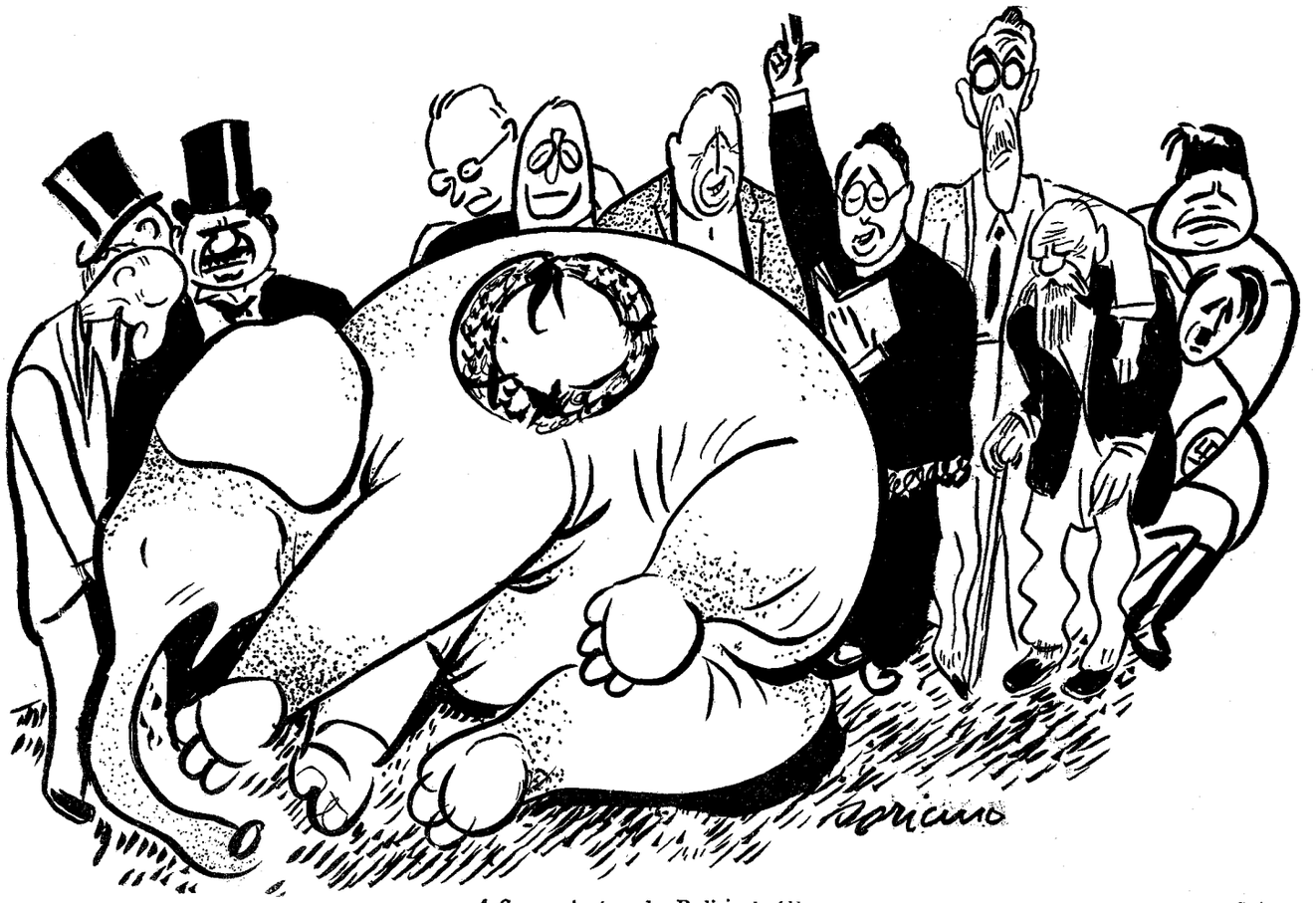
It is not so much the President's reëlection as the size of his vote which needs to be explained; it is there that the chief meaning of the elections may be found. To some extent, Roosevelt's personality played an important role in the campaign. He is one of the shrewdest politicians who ever occupied the White House. From his opening speech at Syracuse, where he expounded the parable of the Silk Hat, to that final radio chat in which he heaped coals of fire upon the opposition, he never missed a trick and never failed to stir the popular imagination. Compared to him, Landon appeared to be a political Milquetoast without brilliance, charm, or force.

But those commentators who exaggerate the role of the President's charm forget that personality plays an insignificant part in politics unless animated by internal conviction and mass support. Al Smith was in his day a first-class political charmer, but his power of persuasion crumpled from the moment he exchanged his brown derby for a top-hat; and Father Coughlin's unctuous radio voice fell upon an increasing number of deaf ears when it became obvious that this alleged friend of the people was talking for the reaction.

The first significant fact about this campaign has been the growing political consciousness of the American people. Many who cast their ballots for Roosevelt endorsed neither a party nor a man; the Postmaster General was more nearly right than he intended to be when, for reasons of his own, he said that this was not the Democratic Party's victory. What the electorate voted for primarily was to keep the tories out of the White House.

Behind Landon stood a concentration of wealth and reaction without precedent in our history. These sinister forces attempted to hide their real aims behind a smokescreen of red-baiting and liberal promises. It is a heartening sign of the times that the vast majority of the American people saw through this hocus-pocus. They were neither alarmed by the Red-baiting nor deceived by the liberal promises. They realized the danger embodied in Hearst, the du Ponts, the Liberty League, and other Landon backers, and they feared it. The 11,000,000 plurality means that most of the nation, whether or not it is satisfied with what the President has accomplished so far, definitely does not want a victory of the reaction.

THE BALLOTING of November 3 was thereby in effect a people's mandate to Roosevelt to carry out certain policies during the next four years. That mandate was based on promises,



A Souvenir for the Political Album

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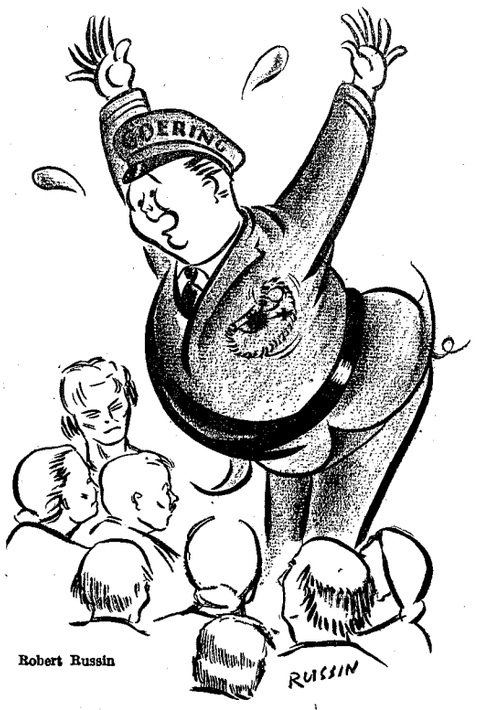
however vague, which the President made during the campaign. True, he did not commit himself to any specific measure, but millions accepted at face value the general pledges he made in Detroit and New York. They believed him when he spoke of reducing working hours, increasing wages, wiping out sweatshops, ending the monopoly of business, supporting collective bargaining. They thought he was promising concessions to the people as against the economic royalists.

The vote for Roosevelt was not only a rebuke to the reaction but a popular demand for better working conditions and higher living standards. This, clearly, is the hope which millions uttered when they cast their ballots for the President. And this is precisely the hope which cannot be realized if the people lie back in illusory assurance that all is well, that all will be well, *automatically*.

THE TORIES have been checked, but they have not been decisively defeated. Today Hearst is crawling in seeming penance to Hyde Park; the Republican press bows its head in alleged sportsmanship; other tories, too, pretend to have discovered that Roosevelt may be right after all; business groups are organizing openly to work with him.

These mock-heroics are not as comic as they may appear on the surface. They are a danger-signal that the reaction is ready to achieve by chicanery what it failed to achieve by the ballot. What Hearst, du Pont, and Morgan could not get through Landon's election they will try to get through Roosevelt's second administration. They will exert tremendous pressure on the White House; they will maneuver and crack down in Congress to wreck measures designed to benefit the people; they will work with their allies within the Democratic Party, with the southern bourbons, Tammany Hall, the Hague machine in New Jersey, the Kelley-Nash gang in Chicago. The menace of extreme reaction is still here, it will continue to be here, it will grow like a deadly cancer unless the people organize for autonomous struggle on behalf of their needs and interests.



"We don't need any more butter! I've lost twenty pounds!"

Three weeks before the balloting we said in these pages: "Washington will give heed to the needs of the masses in direct proportion as these take independent political action." This is as true today as it was then. One of the most important lessons to be learned from Roosevelt's first administration is that he yields to strong pressure. Big business is carefully preparing the pressure it will bring to bear upon the White House. The people must do likewise. They must have at their disposal the means for reminding the President what their November 3 vote really meant, and they must be able to act independently should the President forget.

MOST important of all, the people must assert and develop their sovereignty; they must themselves be the guardians of their interests and rights. They cannot rely upon the President to do that. His fundamental allegiance is to the capitalists, as he said in the plainest possible terms at Syracuse. He then told big business in so many words: you know my heritage; you know my background; I am part and parcel of the ruling class. The difference between me and the tories is that they made no concessions to striking workers, to indignant farmers brandishing pitchforks, to homeless young people; I was smart enough to make concessions. I make concessions in order to save capitalism; I reform to preserve.

Whatever other promises the President may or may not keep, he is sure to keep this one made to big business at Syracuse. He may be compelled to reform, but his main object must of necessity be to preserve. This gives the election its basic significance. If it revealed the widespread resentment against the reaction it also emphasized the profound need for a people's movement and America's readiness for it. Now more than ever must the progressive forces in our national life rely upon their own power. To delay their organized unity in the face of the reaction would be criminal folly. A national farmer-labor party is no longer merely desirable; it has become absolutely imperative.

★ ★ ★

Sharecropper

I

When they rode up at first dark and called his name,
He came out like a man from his little shack.
He saw his landlord, and he saw the sheriff,
And some well-armed riffraff in the pack.
When they fired questions about the meeting,
He stood like a man gone deaf and dumb,
But when the leaders left their saddles,
He knew then that his time had come.
In the light of the lanterns the long cuts fell,
And his wife's weak moans and the children's wails
Mixed with the sobs he could not hold.
But he wouldn't tell, he would not tell.
The union was his friend, and he was union,
And there was nothing a man could say.
So they trussed him up with stout plowlines,
Hitched up a mule, dragged him far away
Into the dark woods that tell no tales,
Where he kept his secrets as well as they.

II

He would not give away the place,
Nor who they were, neither white nor black,
Nor tell what his brothers were about.
They lashed him, and they clubbed his head;
One time he parted his bloody lips
Out of great pain and greater pride,
One time, to laugh in his landlord's face;
Then his landlord shot him in the side.
He toppled, and the blood gushed out.
But he didn't mumble ever a word,
And cursing, they left him there for dead.
He lay waiting, quiet, until he heard
The growls and the mutters dwindle away;
"Didn't tell a single thing," he said.
Then to the dark woods and the moon
He gave up one secret before he died:
"We gonna clean out dis brushwood round here soon,
Plant de white oak and de black oak side by side."

STERLING A. BROWN.

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Writers Disturbing the Peace

The St. Louis project strike involves an issue that strikes very close home

By Jack Conroy

ST. LOUIS'S Wall Street, near Fourth and Olive, is a section of venerable, high, and smoke-smudged buildings. Narrow streets slope down to old and odorous warehouses on the riverfront. There are taverns once the rendezvous of such Mississippi River pilots as Samuel Clemens. Brisk men of finance, smart stenographers, frugally neat filing clerks, swarm in and out of the buildings. Policemen are extraordinarily polite hereabout, for who wants to bawl out a man who may be an investment broker, even though he does wear an unpressed coat?

Investment brokers and their retinues, lapels sprouting Kansas sunflowers, stood about in the afternoon of October 27 watching the picket line of the St. Louis Writers' Union before the Merchants-Laclede Building, where the state office of the Missouri Writers' Project is located. There were some expressions of sympathy from the bystanders, but mostly razzing and wise-cracking. The whole idea of the project seemed comic to the hard-headed business men, and here were the fool writers behaving in a highly comic manner.

It was not long before a policeman, politeness submerged for the nonce, dragged Mathieu Smith, national organizer for the American Writers' Union, from the chair on which he was speaking, herded the twelve pickets into a knot on the sidewalk. Other cops rushed to the seat of rebellion, a patrol wagon shrieked down the street. The pickets were soon lodged in jail, charged with general disturbance of the peace.

Why was the peace of St. Louis's Wall Street being disturbed? Why the first arts project strike in the United States?

Wayne Barker, assistant state supervisor of the Missouri Writers' Project, had been dismissed October 16 by a letter from Mrs. Geraldine B. Parker, state director, without a chance to defend himself against charges of "lack of coöperation and unexplained absences" stated in the letter as cause for dismissal. It was remembered that Barker, in a meeting called by project workers six weeks before to consider the establishment of a union, had vigorously opposed Mrs. Parker's proposal that the union matter be allowed to remain in abeyance until after the Election Day. She was thoroughly convinced of the necessity for a union, she said, but believed political repercussions would result if it were formed before the election. It was pointed out by Barker that an official W.P.A. publication entitled *Our Job With the WPA* answers the question "Is it all right for me to join a workers' union?" with "Yes."

Mrs. Parker, visited by committees from the Writers' Union and officials of the American Newspaper Guild and Workers Alliance of America, insisted that she could do nothing toward the demanded reinstatement of Barker, saying that the power to restore his job rested solely with Henry G. Alsberg, National Director of the Federal Writers' Projects. She could not, she said, accede to the request for Barker's reinstatement on one month's probation, at the end of which he could be fired if the charges against him were substantiated.

Mr. Alsberg refused to answer numerous letters, telegrams, and phone calls. It was learned that he, until he heard that St. Louis was on the phone, might be "in," but steadfastly "out" when he found out who was calling.

The union members, after consultation with St. Louis labor leaders and others, felt that they had no alternative but to strike. After the strike had begun, Mr. Alsberg, after first threatening to hang up if the dread and *verboten* name of Barker were spoken on the phone, told J. S. Balch, Assistant State Director of the Missouri Writers' Project, that he was unwilling to help Barker or to order his reinstatement because Barker had "embarrassed the administration."

How had Barker "embarrassed the administration"? Barker, under the pen name of Michael Hale, had written for the NEW MASSES of August 25 an exposé of the murderous plans of James True, inventor of the "kike killer," a truncheon designed to split the skulls of Jews. True's organization had the amiable and avowed intention of doing away with several high officials of the administration "embarrassed" by the revelation of these plans. Those fated for annihilation, although not named, were part of a list which included Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau, Justices Cardozo and Brandeis of the United States Supreme Court, the late Jesse Isidor Straus (then ambassador to France), and even the Aryan Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, because he had the alleged misfortune to marry a Jewish woman.

The article was not written on project time, but while Barker was on his vacation.

There is involved here a moral lesson for bright young men like Wayne Barker employed on the writers' projects. Confine yourself to the dull flatulence of Chamber of Commerce puffs, and you'll never get your tail in a sling. If you unmask the enemies of all culture and progress, you'll end up whetting the soles off your shoes walking the streets and pounding your ear in flophouses. Take it slow and easy, boy, get wise to yourself. Everybody's doing it. What the hell? You're drawing your pay, ain't you? You can afford to look at the world through rose-colored glasses when your gut is full. Where'd you make that much any place else, where'd you even *get* a job that you'll hold as long as you behave and wink at what goes on? Don't be a sap, you sap!

There are hands and minds that take to the typewriter and the written word soberly and with respect for their uses, just as a good carpenter gets to know the feel of the saw and plane and would never willingly botch up a fine, honest piece of lumber.

The material for the American Guide Book being written by workers of the Federal Writers' Project is a good piece of lumber. The job of assembling the story of America and its people is a fascinating one to an honest craftsman; it is a job that commands the respect and devotion of serious writers.

The administration deserves great credit for inaugurating the Federal Writers' Project. It removed writers from semi-starvation on the relief rolls, gave them new purpose, hope, direction. Our books were not selling, magazines were not buying. Our wives and children needed so much that we could not buy. A lot of us were determined to do our honest stint on the project, then finish or begin books, write poems, articles, stories without the Damoclean sword of starvation hanging over our heads. It can be done. Much of my own early writing was done at night after a long, hard day waltzing around a conveyor belt in an automobile factory. But the factory owners didn't work me on a twenty-four-hour shift.

Does the administration, through the Federal Writers' Projects, intend to stimulate and foster writers, or is its purpose to stifle and emasculate them, close their mouths, keep them in intellectual bondage and submission twenty-four hours a day? Those of us who went at the job of writing the American Guide with the determination to make it a full-bodied, rich, and recognizable picture of life in the United States—the land, its people, their customs, their folk-lore—would like to know.

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The Exiles of Lisbon

Spanish rebel officers and their foreign aids find rest from the strain of warfare

By Ralph Fox

IF ever you contemplate going into exile, voluntarily or involuntarily, there are many worse places than Lisbon.

The town is clean, picturesque, bathed in a soft and charming light that will soothe your exile's heartaches, and there is no ugly poverty visible to sit as skeleton at your table in one of Lisbon's three comfortable hotels.

Certainly, this absence of poverty is purely an architectural accident, since the poor people are crowded into steep and narrow alleys that the great main avenues miss.

In any case, even poverty seems bearable in the gentle light of Lisbon, and the national currency is conveniently depreciated, so that living seems cheap to you, even though it does not to the natives.

A third indispensable factor of the exile's background is present: a cosmopolitan atmosphere.

True, the greater part of the inhabitants are unfortunately Portuguese, but the exiles are all Spanish, the wine-shippers English, the electric railway German, gas and electricity Franco-Belgian, trams, telephones, and policemen's uniforms are English again, while the government's politics are Italo-German.

The government has created a resort for foreigners on a bare cliff over a scrap of Atlantic beach some twenty miles away from Lisbon.

There is a charming terrace café there, a luxurious casino, a beautiful hotel with a really modern bar. A fine motor road and an electric railway join Estoril to Lisbon. An exile's Eden.

The Spanish grandees, counts, marquises, dukes, have fallen in love with Estoril. In their beautifully cut English clothes they fill the casino every night, sit on the terrace café in the afternoons, sun bathe (without the English suitings) in the mornings.

The men are very grand and sallow, middle aged and elderly, the women fat, a little heavily made up for our northern taste, but no one could deny that they have an air with them when their hands are kissed.

DO NOT think the exiles are inclined to portly middle age because the young ones are all away at the front, fighting to free Spain from the Marxist terror. Indeed no. You may see plenty of young people in Lisbon.

Some are simply exquisites, who have only their brains and beauty and a carefully reckoned fraction of their wealth to give to the cause.

Others, the bronzed, square-shouldered ones, are officers on leave from Franco's forces. Or

Theodore Scheel

they are part of the foreign headquarters of the Spanish Phalanx, the fascist organization. Or they work in one or other of the rebel institutions in Lisbon.

They do not, however, work very hard, for that is unbecoming to a grandee. Fortunately much of the business can be carried through in hotel lounges or bars.

In any case, you may see these amateur diplomats, commissaries, and staff officers in the bar at the Victoria or Aviz any night, refreshing themselves after the day's work for the country. They are moderate in their habits and often, to the barman's annoyance (though he, too, is a good patriot) refresh themselves only with coffee.

After dinner you see that the lovelier element of life is not absent. Beautiful ladies sit with them in the bar. They are kept, the cynical say, to refresh the German airmen or Italian military advisers on their way to the front. A dark, perky-faced dancer will sit and tell them droll stories (Gypsy Rose Lee might have envied her in her range) to while the sad hours away.

The women, too, are patriots. All, young and old, wives of marquises, light ladies of the barrooms, dancers and simple ingenues, knit for the soldiers.

I fear there will be many cold feet and unprotected chests among the rebel forces if no better supply is forthcoming, for the ladies, though their hearts are willing, have the noble eighteenth-century attitude to work as something rather decorative than useful.

In the daytime the little groups of men, their red-yellow-red monarchist ribbons prominent on arm or buttonhole, conspire.

Some arrange for anarchist tracts to be printed to woo the anarchist workers from "Marxism." Others arrange for the Lisbon Rotary Club, or the Portuguese Authors' Society, to protest against the destruction of culture, or give faked "atrocity" pictures to Portuguese newspapers.

Sometimes a wealthy foreign refugee arrives romantically. One such, a languid Spanish lady with a Danish passport, regaled an English wine-shipper with the horrors of life in Barcelona. She was going back to Spain to rejoin her husband, now safe in the rebel lines.

All was ready for her. The Danish consul had her passport visaed by the rebels and telegrams sent to her husband in the Spanish frontier town of Ayamonte.

The English vice-consul at Ayamonte would personally bless the reunion of husband and wife. Had not rough men searched her flat in Barcelona? Every man felt himself a Scarlet Pimpernel in her presence.

Occasionally you may also hear big business talk in these lounges. So and so is taking his business out of Spain. He will be willing to start in Portugal, he tells the timid, servile little government official, if he can get oil fuel in place of electricity.

For a few moments great names fly about, Shell, Rio Tinto Corporation, Rothschilds, an English bank.

This is the other side of counter-revolution. When you read of the desperate struggles of men and women to be free in Spain, of the Moorish troops and the legionaries, of the massacres of prisoners, don't forget Lisbon. It has its place in the picture also.

When you were a child they probably scared you with tales of the horrible old women who knitted as the heads fell beneath the guillotine in the French revolution.

Well, think now of the refined picture of the Spanish ladies knitting and playing with the toy dogs in the lounges of Lisbon's hotels while they listen eagerly to the raving obscenities broadcast from Seville by their savior, General Queipo de Llano. Or, if you prefer it, just think of them taking tea under striped umbrellas on the terrace at Estoril, above the Atlantic surf.

These are the right people, the nice people. They own Spain, that country as large as France, with a population of only 20 millions. They are reducing that population still further now, these Spanish noblemen.

They have always kept the birth rate down, whatever criticism the cynical may make of their patriotism.

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The Negro and the Jazz Band

The question of jim-crowism in dance orchestras is discussed in terms of some recent tendencies

By Henry Johnson

SO MUCH has been written about the preëminence of Negroes in American jazz that the assumption has arisen that they have more than held their own in competition with their white contemporaries. The spectacular colored bands, such as Ellington, Calloway, Lunceford, with their gleaming tympani and flashy uniforms, have given the impression that Negro musicians are on the top of the economic ladder. Little does the public know of the tremendous odds even the greatest of colored musicians must constantly battle: racketeering managers, jim-crow unions, outright discrimination.

The white musicians of this country have been guilty of a grave injustice, to themselves as well as to Negroes, by their insistent policy of discrimination and segregation. By relegating the Negro to inefficient, insecure jim-crow locals which are powerless to maintain union standards of hours or wages, the white bureaucracy which has, until recently, been in complete power in the American Federation of Musicians has seriously undermined working conditions for all musicians, regardless of race. In northern as well as southern towns—New York is an important and significant exception—there are separate locals serving the same area, imposing double standards of work. The white folk, being the better organized, have been better able to maintain a semblance of decent working conditions, but the colored locals, lacking in capital and manned as they so often are by petty racketeers, have been unable to enforce any standards at all. As a result, the only musician who has been protected is the big-shot white, who can command from the fancier hotels and cafés a high union wage. But the rank and file of the white unions find themselves competing with the most abused of the colored musicians for the smaller jobs that constitute by far the majority in the country.

In a town such as Kansas City, for example, there are more than eight hundred night spots of some kind or other. Of these the vast majority are joints which employ either a lone piano player or a three- or four-piece "kitty" band. Kansas City has a preponderance of excellent Negro virtuosi who find the best jobs closed to them by the white local, which is interested chiefly in the protection of its more fortunate members. The Negro, therefore, finds himself reduced by economic necessity to working for whatever he can get, and what he can eke out ranges from fifty cents a night to a high of two dollars and a half. The café owner, realizing that he can get acceptable music for these outrageous prices, accordingly refuses to pay any more for the white musician, union member though he may be, and the two races find themselves competing to work for less than subsistence wages, while the owners profit from their division. Once again, as in other forms of labor, a vicious system keeps the Negro and white in competition while the inevitable exploiters take advantage of their rivalry.

THE ACCEPTANCE of swing music, which is fundamentally Negroid, has improved the bargaining power of the black musician immeasurably. A place like the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Boston, which once would have scorned the idea of a colored band, found that people of all classes are demanding guts and swing in their music, and consequently installed a Negro orchestra in their roof garden for the summer. The white locals are going to find it increasingly difficult to hold the best of the black musicians down; public demand for Negro music will force them to follow the example of New York's Local 802, which gives Negroes the same rights and protection that it gives any other of its members.

With the presence of Negro and white musicians in the same locals there is every reason to wish for bands with both races, a common occurrence in Europe. Benny Goodman has already pointed the way with Teddy Wilson, the brilliant Negro pianist, a permanent member of his organization, and Fletcher Henderson, James Mundy, and Henry Woods, all of them colored, regular members of his arranging staff. In New York this summer there was an excellent mixed band playing at the Hickory House, one of the better eating establishments. Neither Goodman nor the restaurant has encountered any prejudice from the public at the presence of Negroes. On the contrary, there was instantaneous praise on all sides for taking a step which has seemed obvious for many years. By putting the Negro musician on the same plane as the white, the union will not only benefit the former but protect the scale for all the members.

IN VIEW of the advantages that the Negro can attain by coöperating with whites, the campaign of Porter Roberts, columnist for the Negro paper, the Pittsburgh *Courier,* for segregation in music is particularly misguided. It is Roberts's contention that the Negro must regard the white musician as his enemy, refuse to coöperate with him by arranging or playing with him, and shun his unions. Roberts advises colored musicians to accept booking only from colored promoters, who have a way of caricaturing the faults and vices of their white competitors, and withdraw into the shell of race pride.

There is but one answer to Roberts's arguments: history has proved them wrong. Segregation has been the lot of the colored worker in this country, and in no case has it proved beneficial to him. Only by unity between Negroes and whites will they both be able to survive and flourish. We hope that somebody calls the attention of Robert Vann, publisher of the *Courier,* champion of John L. Lewis and the C.I.O., to the repeated remarks of his commentator. Even his editorial page, which has by no means always been a tribune of progressivism, now espouses the unity of black and white.

"Yours is a case of the masses intruding upon the subconscious." Serrano

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Western Writers Make History

Safeguards for political and economic independence are on the agenda at the San Francisco congress

By Isidor Schneider

WESTERN writers are assembling in San Francisco in a three-day conference which, however the newspapers will look upon it, will be a historic event. The Hearst press may give it falsified history as a Red menace, attacking it as it has attacked every step toward a self-justifying humanity. The stodgier press, noting that it speaks no academic passwords, may ignore it, as it has ignored so much of living history. The labor movement and progressives everywhere, however, will recognize its historical significance.

The third of such literary congresses, it is likely to be the most significant. It occurs in a section of the country where the class war is in the open and where reaction has unmasked itself by putting on its vigilante masks; and it occurs among writers, many of whom, being in the movie industry, work *as writers* in a more professional sense and in conditions and under hazards more closely approximating those faced by workers, than any other considerable group of writers.

What is the significance of this banding together of the traditionally most lonely figures in American society? It is the conscious seeking by the writer of his normal place in society. For generations since literature was made an exploitable commodity, too many writers surrendered or retreated—surrendered to the Curtis Co. checkbook or retreated into deliberate isolation. Self-eliminated by compromise or withdrawal, the essential status of the writer in society has been obscured both to the people and to himself.

Nevertheless, the images by which a people measures itself and guides itself have come from the writers. Dreiser was needed to show the tragedy of American life. In a sense Sinclair Lewis predicted the 1929 crash by exposing the moral bankruptcy that must, inevitably, have resulted in invalidated material assets. Even T. S. Eliot, in his isolation, made a revealing chart.

There are new images to be made. Instinctively the awakening masses of the American people have turned to writers. It is to be seen in workers' bookshops, in workers' clubs when a writer comes to speak, in the public meetings with which the congresses have opened. The writer has responded to this feeling toward him. But there has been another feeling reaching towards him to which he is also responding. American capitalism, which has made his existence a hardship, now, in its reactionary stage, threatens it altogether. The existence of general culture which is vital to him and to which writers throughout the world have, for the most part, been loyal, even in fascist countries at the cost of imprisonment and exile, is also being threatened in America. The mobilization of writers in its defense has been one of the most inspiring things in the anti-fascist struggle.

The first considerable recent indication of this movement, now greatly broadened, came four years ago with the formation of the League of Professional Groups, in which writers predominated. This league supported the candidacy of Foster and Ford in the 1932 presidential election. A little less than two years ago, there was held in New York the American Writers Congress, which was called together on a broad and basic program of fixing the writer's social and economic status in American life and of defense of American culture against fascist tendencies. Out of it came the League of American Writers, a national organization affiliated with the International Congress of Writers for the Defense of Culture. Not directly traceable to it is the Writers' Union, which from a New York origin has expanded into a national organization carrying on immensely important economic activities.

Earlier this year there was a Congress of Midwestern Writers which had inspiring results.

With the Western Writers Congress, the trend to regional organization, necessary in a country so vast, is maintained, and promises through coördinated activities to give the League of American Writers or whatever unifying organization will develop from these regional groups, functions of increased national importance.

Reading the list of signers of the call to the Western Writers Congress, one is struck both by the numbers and the importance of the writers participating. They include, among others, Upton Sinclair, John Steinbeck, Dorothy Parker, Humphrey Cobb, Charles Erskine Scott Wood, Ella Winter, Sara Bard Field, Max Miller, Michael Gold, Irwin Shaw, Edwin Justus Mayer, Haakon Chevalier, Viola Brothers Shore, Martin Flavin, William Saroyan, Myron Brinig, Nathanael West, Albert Rhys Williams, Helen Hoyt. Lincoln Steffens had been one of the movers of the congress shortly before his death.

The West has always had interesting circles of writers, especially in San Francisco. To these have been added the immense migration of writers to Hollywood, which now houses perhaps the major literary industry in the nation, certainly the one with the largest public. Here we have had a remarkable example, never adequately commented upon, of the power of technological invention to influence the arts. It is possible that the ultimate effects of the great technological changes in the transmission of ideas—the display advertisement, the cinema, and radio—will be as far-reaching as those of printing.

First came the display advertisements—especially important in America—which fixed many writers at copy desks, changed the entire nature of journalism, transformed the magazines, and, through the cheapness made possible by the advertising subsidy, added the masses to the American reading public with consequences not yet finally assessable.

Then came the movies, enlarging that public and bringing a new literary art into the world.

More recently, we have had radio, with potentialities still to be explored.

But, while the signatures to the call by their concentration of so many writers at one point illustrate an effect of technological and economic change, of more immediate importance are the factors and motives that led to the congress, and which have already been commented upon.

The program of the Western Writers Congress speaks for both the realism and the idealism of the writers involved. It dedicates itself to "democracy and creative freedom," and it seeks to evolve out of the congress a permanent organization to oppose "the forces of reaction which threaten to destroy cultural values" in America. In California, which has had its vigilante fascism, this is a close and immediate task.

The congress opens with a public session on November 13 at which Upton Sinclair will be one of the speakers, and will continue for two successive days and evenings. The sessions will include discussions on "The Writers in a Changing World," "Censorship," "Suppression," "Fascist Trends," "The Economics of the Writing Profession," "Creative Problems and Criticism," "Writing and Propaganda," and seminars on the novel, poetry, drama, stage, screen, social science, etc.

Out of these discussions will be born an organization capable of intelligent and vigorous defense against reaction. Out of it the writers will come more realistically aware of their place in the social system and their need for expression within the terms of contemporary life. Toward them will go the welcome of the labor movement, and of the progressive forces of America who realize that literature, with its powers to fructify life, has come into their fraternity.

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Reverse English

The twist that the British foreign office can give to news through its official unofficial spokesmen leaves at least one head in a whirl

By Robert Forsythe

WHETHER it is age or the general confused state of the world, I find myself becoming increasingly muddled by what I read in the newspapers. I have reference particularly to those interpretive articles which appear in the New York *Times* and influence American thinking more deeply than any other foreign correspondence. The fact that most of the foreign correspondence of the *Times* is done by Englishmen may have something to do with my dilemma, but I think the real reason lies in the fundamentally Alice in Wonderland quality which has crept into foreign affairs recently.

The activities of the Earl of Plymouth, chairman of the so-called neutrality committee on Spain, have somewhat unsettled me. To Russia's complaint about Portugal, his ludship answered with a phrase which may come dangerously close to making him immortal. He said, "I have referred the matter to the Portuguese and have asked them to supply complete information about their actions."

Brief reflection upon this will tend to shatter the intellect, and needs to be avoided by lesser minds. It seems to mean that a judge can most easily handle criminal cases by suggesting that the second-story man go forth and assemble such information as will make it clear that he did indeed climb into the house by way of the roof of the front porch. If he should discover that he didn't climb the porch, his testimony will naturally outweigh that of seven householders who watched him at it and of the cop who arrived in time to meet him on the roof.

The affair worked out in just this way with Portugal. To his excellency's question about their actions, the Portuguese replied that they had racked their brains and couldn't recall a single thing they had done to assist the fascist forces of General Franco. There was obviously nothing the Earl of Plymouth could do in the circumstances but give the Portuguese a clean bill of health. Just to make it correct, he added that the Italians also had been as pure and white as the lily. Thinking, however, that where there was so much smoke there must be some fire, he announced that undoubtedly there was a great deal of guilt on the part of the Russians, who had brought the complaint. The British press greeted this warmly as being the well-considered judgment of an English gentleman, and there was general agreement that when the Spanish imbroglio was ended it would be found that Albion had come out of it with honor and possibly a bit more territory.

I must confess that it is matters of this nature which are making me fear for myself. I examine the evidence attentively and keep a firm finger on my pulse and yet I am afraid that my understanding is being undermined. When my attention wanders over onto the preserves of "Augur" and Mr. Frederick T. Birchall in the *Times,* I get anything but the solace my weakened nature requires. It is well understood in enlightened circles that Augur speaks for the British Foreign Office. I mean it is not a rumor or a suspicion, but an established fact which is expected to be known by readers of discernment. It would be better if the *Times* prefixed a statement to this effect with Augur's dispatches, but in that event the British Foreign Office would withdraw from the pact immediately and Augur would be

Zach

Post-Election Masquerade

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reduced to less importance than the average correspondent. For that reason the polite fiction is maintained and nobody is the worse for it but the large body of readers who are not privy to such inside dealings.

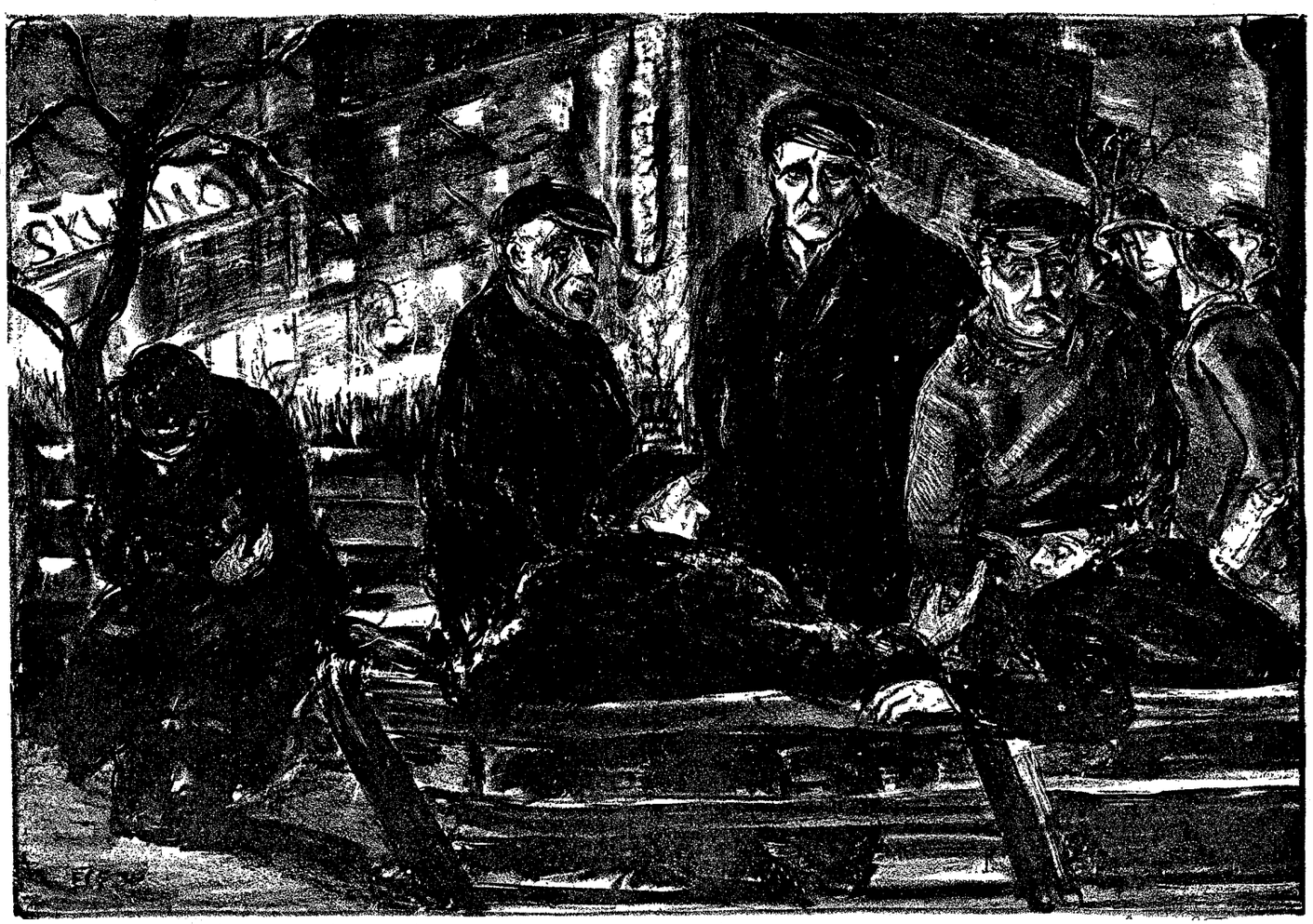
However, that is not the point. I am not questioning the ethics of the parties involved. Since I know Augur's source of news, I can examine his opinions with interest and profit. Mr. Birchall is a similar case. He is himself and he is an accomplished journalist and one can assume that when he speaks definitely of matters affecting the English government he has tapped authoritative sources for his information. Because of this I was not surprised at finding that their views of the activities of the Soviet Union in Spain were identical. Both Augur and Mr. Birchall wrote from London, and they expressed with some spirit the indignation felt in official London circles at the doings of the Bolsheviks.

That was entirely understandable, but where I went astray was in the reasons given. Augur is not one to mince words. He wrote in the most casual fashion (as is his usual style), as if what he was writing was so generally accepted in the world that there was no need either of proof or comment. In short the Spanish revolt was the result of the Comintern sending fifty agents into Spain. As I say, Augur tossed this off as if it was dinner-table conversation throughout London and no more a matter of dispute than the rising of the sun.

The statement set me to thinking and I ended with that strange feeling that has been worrying me lately. The Comintern sends fifty agents into Spain and launches a revolt. I am well aware that the Comintern has amounted to nothing since Trotsky left the Soviet Union. Any Trotskyist will admit this and add with a shrug: what can you expect of people like the Russians? If it is necessary for the argument, I will concede that God never made people more stupid than the Russians, and yet that business of the fifty agents and revolt stumps me. What was the exact line of reasoning? According to the official English theory, as stated by Augur and Birchall, it must have been: "Well, let's see now. . . . Are Franco and Mola fully armed and prepared, do they have the soldiers and Legion and Moors clearly on their side, and have they arranged for the necessary supplies from Italy and Germany? How about our people? Are they absolutely defenseless, are they totally unarmed, have they agreed to act as if they are unaware of anything stirring? In that event, everything is ready. Revolt!"

At this point in the discussion, I experience slight quivers in the frame which suggest that either I am insane or the world is cockeyed. Franco and his Moors were forced into defense and it was only by accident that they had everything prepared. This is what Augur writes in the New York *Times* and I am certainly not the man to doubt the British Foreign Office. It will certainly be upon such grounds that the Rebel government is recognized if and when they successfully occupy Madrid.

If anything more is needed to clinch the case I am certain that Mr. Eden can arrange it. He has been prompt to warn the legal government at Madrid upon several occasions, and there will be need shortly of action to preserve the rights of the native peoples throughout the world. A good scolding for the Spanish ambassador might very well be worked out on the basis of cruelty to Moors, who have repeatedly been fired upon by the loyal troops without warning. With the well-known protective zeal of the British for all native peoples, it will obviously be necessary for Mr. Eden or Mr. Baldwin to do something about the matter. If it should happen that the Moors were not to have their holiday in Madrid as promised by General Franco, it would be a blow both to British foreign policy and traditional British hospitality. I await Augur's Monday morning article on the subject.



Lithograph by Eugene C. Fitsch

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READERS' FORUM

Defend the Ewerts!—Little Orphan Annie and H. L. Mencken—A farmer speaks

● Elise Ewert and Mme. Benario Prestes, wife of Luis Carlos Prestes, Brazil's "Knight of Hope," have been deported from Rio de Janeiro to Nazi Germany. From the Hapag dock in Hamburg they were sped to the headquarters of the Gestapo (Secret Police) and thence to a Berlin jail. In delivering them to the Gestapo, Dictator Vargas of Brazil ignored the appeals of liberals in the United States and Europe who asked that the prisoners be granted the right of asylum in a country of their own choosing. Neither was the treatment accorded Mme. Prestes modified by the fact that she is an expectant mother. Vargas's inhuman action makes us feel grave concern over the fate of Luis Prestes himself, who remains incommunicado after many months' imprisonment in Rio de Janeiro.

All of this lends utmost significance to the imminent return of Isobel Walker Soule and James Waterman Wise from a voyage of investigation in Brazil. Mrs. Soule and Mr. Wise will report their observations at a reception to be tendered them on November 23 at 8:30 p. m. in the Hotel New Yorker. I urge every reader of the NEW MASSES to attend this reception. The bestiality of the Vargas government is a challenge to every enlightened American.

MARINA LOPEZ,
Joint Committee for the Defense of the Brazilian People.

Little Orphan Annie

● Cartoonist Harold Gray's Little Orphan Annie seems to be worried about the attitude that some of us are taking toward those kind, public-spirited industrialists, who pay their workers such high wages and keep the common weal so close to their hearts. Many times she has gone blocks out of her way just to meet one of these fine gentlemen and tell us of his beautiful deeds.

We "failures" and "havenots" who sometimes raise our voices against "big" men feel quite ashamed of ourselves, don't we? And aren't we ashamed of those horrid cartoons in the NEW MASSES?

Little Orphan Annie has explained things to us. Now we know that all "successful" men begin as newsboys. Perhaps some of them started up the ladder to "success" by studying Willie Hearst's editorials when the sales were bad.

I like the new NEW MASSES very much. The new art work plus the excellent features and articles that you have always printed bring you nearer to perfection than any other magazine in the country.

CHARLES CUNNINGHAM.

About Mr. Mencken

● Isidor Schneider, in your September 29 issue, gave us a timely and much needed critical estimate of Henry L. Mencken. But some of the shots hit Mr. Mencken's former readers instead of Mencken himself.

No one can accept the proposition that Mr. Mencken's audience in the heyday of his glory consisted of a lewd pack of decadent bourgeois cynics. You couldn't throw a stone into a Communist Party mass meeting without hitting someone who, one time in the past, heartily agreed with Mr. Mencken's bitter assault on everything that was typically bourgeois.

During those days I was a seaman, and the old *American Mercury* circulated like wildfire through all the bunk rooms. I will say this much: although Mencken's merciless and accurate attack on bourgeois idiocy met with enthusiastic response, his cynicism failed to "take." And, in those days, the greater part of the bourgeoisie hated Mencken like poison. I happen to know of one young fellow who was fired from his job because he read the *American Mercury*.

Sure, Mencken is despondent and has lost his audience. That is because his audience is now in the ranks of the revolutionary movement.

Here's the plain truth. Mencken didn't know precisely what he was attacking. Neither did we, at the time. Later, we came to understand that his target was bourgeois culture.

Mencken never found this out. He doesn't even know it today. Instead of advancing intellectually with his readers, he sank back into a slough of decay. He came to the conclusion that what he was attacking was the stupidity of the mass of people. He took the attitude that the mass of people is stupid and that the only thing really worth while is a small handful of superior intellectuals who "really have taste" and "really understand things."

The melting away of his audience became almost unanimous. From that point forward, he was no longer a poorly informed but very observant critic of bourgeois inanity. He was a man overwhelmed by his own former "success" and striving in every way he knew how to maintain his pinnacle of fame. Today he is a pathetic figure. He will say almost anything or pander to almost anyone who will give him an ear. His last resort is to turn to the very influences he once assailed. Hearst and the Liberty League will print him. They offer him one last opportunity to get before the public.

Mencken's readers were a large and representative section of the American public which has developed far beyond him. The only ones who are not lost to him are those few who degenerated into egotistical cynicism with him.

MICHAEL QUIN.

More on Browder in Terre Haute

● Readers of the NEW MASSES's November 3 report on Terre Haute may be interested in material which was cut for space. The deletions destroyed continuity and coherence at certain points and blurred two vital aspects of the events in relation to organized labor.

Among leaders of the mob that forcibly denied Communist Candidate Earl Browder's right of free speech were two lawyers. These same lawyers had figured in Terre Haute business's vigilante aid to soldiery in violently suppressing the Terre Haute general strike last year. I refer to Charles Whitlock and Ben F. Small. The former is the official counsel of the Terre Haute Merchants Association. Both are prominent in the Law and Order League, formed by the Merchants Association and Chamber of Commerce members during the strike. The League is an open strike-breaking force. Its leadership is credited by Terre Haute union leaders with standing behind anti-union terror after the strike was smashed. The post-strike terror brought spectacular bombings and attacks by vigilantes and thugs upon a college professor, and Central Labor Union and unemployed leaders in their homes and at work during recent weeks. The same Lawyer Whitlock and the same Lawyer Small defended city officials in a court hearing on Browder's suit to enjoin interference with his second effort to make a radio broadcast in Terre Haute.

Acutely aware of the fascist import of previous happenings, Terre Haute labor and liberals rallied to Browder in defense not only of his but also of their own civil rights. The Central Labor Union formally and unanimously condemned the jailing of Browder, and called for mass attendance at the court proceeding during his second visit—an attendance that materialized and heard Browder's testimony, which was omitted from my article. Prominent labor and liberal citizens made spontaneous visits to Browder between the court proceeding and the radio station incident. Those Hoosiers—industrial workers, intellectuals, small business, and farm people—emphasized that although they have a growing farmer-labor movement and mean to fight for democratic rights, they feel a critical need of solid support and united action by progressive forces everywhere.

MARGUERITE YOUNG.

H. Dornblatt

What Indiana Teaches

● For years, I read *Liberty,* the *Red Book, Cosmopolitan,* etc., and I only regret that I did not know that there was a NEW MASSES. There must be millions of people like me who would be only too glad to throw into the ashcan the trash they buy in exchange for something worthwhile. The NEW MASSES keeps me informed and teaches me how to read between the lines of our prostituted press here on the Pacific Coast.

I graduated from an Indiana high school and worked my way through three semesters at Terre Haute State Normal, taught school for two years in Indiana, and lived to be forty-two years old before I learned that Eugene Debs was a native of my state. That's how they teach students in Indiana.

R. H.

A Dairy Farmer Agrees

● Bruce Minton's article, "What's Wrong with Milk?" in the October 20 issue, is a fair and fine exposition of the dairy farmer's plight. I wish more farmers here in Vermont and in New York too could know that city people not only sympathize with them but understand their circumstances. It is hard work making working-class people understand the farmers are not capitalists, as local politicians are always telling them, and that coöperation does not mean that they are no longer "individuals." That's actually what lots of our neighbors in the Boston milkshed tell us.

W. B. J.

Correcting Folklore

● How ever did you let that story about the "rough workman" appearing before the Bolshevik Central Committee on the eve of the Revolution, sneak into Flashbacks in the November 3 issue of the NEW MASSES? Stalin takes two pages in his *October Revolution* to hit at this and "similar Arabian-Nights tales." This bit of folklore was first published in John Reed's *Ten Days that Shook the World,* but it has been corrected in later editions.

PAUL WILSON.

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NEW MASSES

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★

The Fate of Spain

DISPATCHES report that General Franco has entered Madrid. This news will distress millions the world over to whom Spain has become the fighting symbol of human liberty but the most alert of them will realize, even in this dark hour, that the battle is neither ended nor irrevocably lost.

But in order for the Spanish republic to save its life from the fascist hordes which have assaulted it, certain facts must be faced squarely. From the beginning the cause of the republic was just, its numbers overwhelming. If ever there was a righteous people's war in history, this was it. The government was duly elected by a vast majority; the rebels sought to overthrow it illegally, by force of arms. The republic was defending the most elementary democracy; the rebels were seeking to establish fascism.

Had the two contending forces been battling on a plane of technical equality, victory would never have been in doubt for the republic. But Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany *armed* the rebels; the Spanish people was left to defend itself with almost primitive means.

For three and a half months the republic has been blockaded while its barbarous foes received every kind of aid. Here we have not only a tragedy but a crime. The blockade was originally undertaken upon the private initiative of Great Britain, seconded by Léon Blum of France, who took public responsibility for it. Britain's ultimate responsibility cannot be ignored or evaded. And the injury is rendered all the more monstrous by the insult under which it was committed. The Spanish people were left to defend themselves barehanded in the name of neutrality!

What sort of neutrality is it that permits Germany and Italy to present the rebels with airplanes, artillery and tanks? Is it non-intervention for Hitler and Mussolini to send seasoned fliers to bomb Spanish towns? Is Great Britain keeping out of the fight when it permits Portugal to become a base of operations for Franco's armies? What possible meaning can there be to the atrocious and hypocritical response of the so-called neutrality commission to the criticisms and proposals of the Soviet Union? Only one. Great Britain —and under Britain's pressure, France—have been holding the hands of the Spanish people while the fascists slaughtered them. Neutrality in this case has meant one-sided aid. Italy and Germany were given free reign, while more democratic countries were prevented from helping the republic. The fruit of this policy is entrance of the Moors into Madrid.

Despite this horrible betrayal, the Spanish people have fought for life and liberty with a heroism and persistence unsurpassed in the annals of mankind. They will continue so to fight. As black as the situation may look at this moment, Madrid can yet be saved, and if it falls let the world rest assured that the Spanish republic will carry on the fight from some other effective base.

It is now imperative to give up the mockery of so-called neutrality and non-intervention. If Germany and Italy can arm Spanish fascism, there is no reason on earth why more progressive countries with full justification in international law should not aid the legal Spanish people's government. Indeed, there is no charity in this. The victory of fascism in Spain would immeasurably strengthen fascism and augment the danger of war the world over. For democratic peoples everywhere the defense of Spain is to all intents and purposes self-defense. We owe it to ourselves to see to it that the republic has the proper arms, medical supplies, food.

In this connection, it is important for all American progressives to prevent the United States government from following Britain's path. This country is not formally a partner to "non-intervention." The State Department has assured the NEW MASSES that there is no legal obstacle whatever to prevent the Spanish republic from purchasing arms, munitions, or any other supplies in the United States.

But consider the treatment of the S. S. *Sil*. When that Spanish ship arrived in New York, the Hearst press threw out a hint that arms were being shipped to the Spanish republic. At once United States customs agents searched the *Sil,* frisked its passengers, opened cases of sheepskin coats, medical supplies, boots and worn overcoats contributed to the Spanish loyalists by New York sympathizers—and remained on board the vessel till she sailed. This action is hardly reassuring to the friends of Spanish democracy in this country. It is contrary to American law and only serves to aid the fascists.

The progressive men and women of America want to see Franco defeated; they wish to do all they can to assist the Spanish republic in its struggle for life. They resent the aid which Italy and Germany are freely giving the fascists; they are indignant at Britain's treacherous policy. Under the laws of this country, no one may hinder them from doing what they can for democratic Spain. We urge our readers to participate in such aid. The North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy is organizing medical units in this country for service in Spain. Help them. Help Spain to rid itself of fascism and safeguard its territories from the warmad dictators.

Unrest in the U.S.S.R.?

FOR the benefit of those skeptics who doubt anything the left-wing press has to say favorable to the Soviet Union, we quote briefly from the *Weekly Observer,* a private news-magazine sold at $25 a year to "the busy business executive": "Russia now leads the world in the production of tractors and is second only to the United States in the production of automobiles. Emphasis is now shifting gradually to the production of 'luxury' and 'comfort' items. Consumption is increasing because of higher wages and lower commodity prices. . . . Last year the average earnings of a working family increased 71% over the preceding year. . . . Since the beginning of this year, lower commodity prices have increased the average monthly purchasing power of working-class families by an equivalent of 200 rubles. . . . Wages have increased 29% since last year."

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

A French war novel—Humane fiction—Aesop and Karl Marx, Mexico and New Orleans

LOUIS GUILLOUX'S *Bitter Victory* (translated by Samuel Putnam. McBride. $2.50) is good. It is the best novel from France since Malraux, but not at all like Malraux, and not like the usual French novel. It is ample, like nineteenth-century fiction, full of incident and detailed characterization, but its plot has a modern concentration of time; a day in the life of its characters, a day which, by careful allusion, reconstructs their whole past. It has, further, the modern sense of the individual, the individual forced in upon himself. Gone is the broad horizon that cheered the fictional landscapes of the nineteen-hundreds, when there was believed to be infinite room for ambition and curiosity. Ambition frustrated, curiosity repelled, the retreat into the self which acquired a science, in psychoanalysis, had its art in the psychologizing novel.

But the psychological novel now has gone a good step further. The first return to the self made a virtue of the return. If the world outside was ugly, the world within, it was believed, would be tragic perhaps, but beautiful. Instead it proved to be the completing stage of disillusion. External injustices were seen to have balances in internal mutilations. The interior of the self might be tragic, but it was contorted rather than beautiful. This led to the fusion of psychological realism and naturalism, the portrayal together of those complementary entities—social evils and individual frustrations—which characterizes the best of recent fiction. *Bitter Victory* is a superb example of it.

Its chief figure is Cripure, whom a physical deformity has made reserved and indrawn. He has acquired, as a scholar and writer on abstruse subjects, just enough of a reputation to do him harm by drawing upon him the envy and intrigues of his colleagues at the provincial *lycée* where he teaches. To the more sensitive students he has glamour as a solitary living a life pure and withdrawn and in prolonged dissent from an evil social system; but when the actual content of that life is disclosed in its despair and its furtive and petty compensations, the disciples are revolted; Cripure's dissent has degenerated into mere querulous misanthropy; his life into a nursing of memories and a regimen of soothing habits.

The action, occurring on a day and night during the World War, all leads to a central event, a reception in honor of an upper-class woman who is to be decorated for war work. All the stuffed shirts of the town, the bureaucracy and the bourgeoisie, are preparing with gusto for an occasion at which they will make speeches, display themselves agreeably, fatigue themselves at their sort of "war work." In the background, however, is the ominous note of a mutiny of entrained soldiers at the railroad station; the discovery of a revolutionary poem; the silent agony of the headmaster of the school who has received the news that his son has been court-martialed; the torment of Cripure and others who must attend, knowing that they will be snubbed if they come and suspected if they stay away. A then minor sensation is the act of Cripure, as startling to him as to others: a slap on the smug cheek of Nabucet, in whom all the pretentious vulgarity, all the meanness of the French bourgeoisie have come to glossy perfection. The slap leads to a double ending, Cripure's and Nabucet's, a tragic burlesque that is profoundly moving.

Cripure is one of the most pitiful, Nabucet one of the most revolting, and both among the most interesting and completely realized portraits in modern fiction. The absurdity of "refuge from society" is made plain by what it comes to in actual life. The binder of sentimentality that covers and fixes the composite of hypocrisy, smugness, and selfishness of the bourgeoisie in its hour of corruption is expertly dissolved. Here is satire so penetrating and adult that *Main Street* and *Babbitt* seem thin and adolescent in comparison. The book has its flaws; its insistence upon compressing its action into one day gives an occasional feeling of congestion; here and there the description is excessive; but, regardless, the book easily stands among the largest fictional structures of the year.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

A Strengthening Undertone

EGGS AND BAKER, *by John Masefield. Macmillan.* $2.50.

THE poet laureate reveals, in this novel, a commendably greater loyalty to truth than to the class that laureled him. *Eggs and Baker,* despite its clownish title, is eloquent with passion against social and economic injustices. If it goes back, in its setting, to the late eighteen hundreds, it must be recalled that it was then that Masefield himself had his sharpest experience of social inequality. And there is no indication that, in his mind, the evils have passed away with the years. His principal character is Mansell, a liberal and a deeply religious man. The action centers around the murder trial of two poachers who killed a warden in an attempt to escape arrest. One of the two men is half-witted and both are poverty-stricken. Mansell tries to raise funds for their defense by distributing a pamphlet indicating the origins of the crime in social injustices. The trial is smoothly steered toward the death penalty; Mansell, protesting, is jailed for contempt.

W. Millus

The class he has affronted takes further vengeance; Mansell, a baker, is dispossessed by his landlord. He is forced to make his living among the workers, which gives Masefield further opportunity to reveal their oppression.

The book is weakened by what in Masefield's mind may seem to make a balance, by portraits of "bad radicals" to set against the good, and by a poor conclusion—a generous great-aunt appears (to provide a happy ending); and in her benevolence the general problem, along with Mansell's specific problem, is submerged. It is a pity that Masefield's indignant memories should not have risen to any clear vision; but a voice as respected as his is a strengthening undertone to the clearer voices speaking a profounder condemnation.

BERNARD COREY.

Humanity Instead of Hate

COURTHOUSE SQUARE, *by Hamilton Basso. Scribner's.* $2.50.

HAMILTON BASSO, in three other novels, a biography, and critical articles, has spoken with quiet authority about the past and present South. In *Courthouse Square,* his chief character is rebuked by the sentimentalists back home for not writing like James Lane Allen and Thomas Nelson Page, and by the sophisticates (southern style) for not writing of the "decent" middle class. *Courthouse Square,* giving a cross-section of a small South Carolina town, necessarily attends to this middle class but reveals little decency. The book's indictment is all the more serious for its being tempered. Mr.

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Basso does not tear the old picture out of its frame, nor daub the stock figures with livelier colors; he goes quietly about painting a new picture from what he has seen and brooded over, a picture that should be hung over many past and contemporary misrepresentations.

Exasperated by the literary parties of New York, and unhappy because his marriage is on the rocks (his wife hated violence and he delivered a violent left-hook at a party), David Barondess returns to Macedon. He hardly expects a refuge. His family had an unfortunate history for the section; his grandfather had fought in the Union army; John, his father, after reversing a sentence upon a framed Negro, had been politically murdered; his aunt saltily spoke her mind, for all of her admiration for *The Kentucky Cardinal;* and he was a fairly successful novelist. It is not long before he sees what he hated in New York reappearing in provincial garb in Macedon, with much else. Alcide Fauget, a Negro doctor, plans to buy the Legendre mansion, decaying symbol of the "glorious" past, and consults his old friend, John Barondess. A self-important Negro hotel doorman blurts the news. Forces gather. When a deputy sheriff is shot by a Negro badman, the mob spirit is inflamed against all Negroes and "nigger-lovers." David and a friend save Fauget, but David is beaten into insensibility. The news reaches his estranged wife who, seeing David against his native background, discovers that his violence springs from hatred of cruelty.

This small town lives. There is the faked Attic courthouse, with a pompous statue of Cincinnatus Quintius Legendre before it; classic stage-set for horseshoe-pitching, checker-playing, mule-hitching, and Negro-bulldozing. The drugstore, Kolopoxolos's Dixie American Restaurant, the Negro church with its "phthistic melodion," Fauget's dim old curiosity shop of a pharmacy, the lone hotel with its drummer trade, the *Mercury's* offices, the jail where Negro prisoners are abused when poker hands run bad, Jayhawker House on Abolitionist Hill where the Barondesses live; all are vividly realized. But setting in its broader sense is here too, an understanding of what the South is, and how it got that way. To Barondess and to Mr. Basso, the South has long been "wrapped in romance and rhetoric like a cocoon." Its real shame has been rationalized and driven deep down, the more sensitive elements becoming unhappy and evasive and the less sensitive becoming vicious. Mr. Basso argues that what is called decay is really lag, that the South is making an abortive attempt to keep old institutions, and that what is hateful is part of the legacy, and not a decline, from boasted grandeur.

It is significant that two members of the upper crust fanned the blaze that swept the town. They are Pick Eustis, lustful and envious, a defender of "decent" people, and Dan Lamar, descendant of the town's great general, who cheats and shoots Negroes with equal callousness. Doctor Phil rises above the ruck. Uncle Loosh, with a prize bird-dog that eats his prize pigeons, and Miss Celia, scolding her impractical menfolk often and long, but deeply loving them, are drawn with cordial understanding. Negro characters show some intimate observation; Uncle Jim having to play hat-in-hand to Pick, shows his contempt when he can. One of the most interesting people is Fauget, light enough to have received a medical degree from a southern white college, but now serving his own people. Without the Lamars knowing it, he is related to them, being the son of General Legendre and an Octoroon mother. One wonders if in this old man there lurked a last brand of irony still aglow in spite of the forced submissiveness. A man so conversant with the South must have recognized the sacrilege of buying the Legendre mansion, although decayed and magnificent only by moonlight, for a Negro hospital. Be that as it may, he stands four-square before us, a fine person, finely rendered.

Courthouse Square has obvious autobiographical traces: the hero, of an old southern and Latin family, is a novelist who returns to his native region. More important still, however, is this: David Barondess sets himself fiercely against the "hates drummed into the heads of a section" and wishes to set up honest awareness and human decency in their place. So does the novel itself; Hamilton Basso reveals himself further as courageous, intelligent, and humane.

STERLING A. BROWN.

Fables in Modern Dress

ÆSOP SAID SO, *Lithographs by Hugo Gellert. Covici, Friede.* $1.75.

"THE voice of a slave who became a free man speaks to us. Twenty-five hundred years cannot dull the wit nor dim the truth and wisdom that his voice carries."

So writes Hugo Gellert in his foreword. The actual existence of Æsop, like that of Shakespeare, Jesus, and Homer, has been questioned. It does not matter. The tradition presents him as a slave. Whether it was out of one mouth or many, the voice was that of the people. Gellert uses its enduring significance to satirize the modern parallels.

John Mackey

For example: the fable of the bear boasting to the fox of his love for man whom he never disturbs when dead, and the fox replying, "I should have thought more of you if you had as much consideration for the living." The drawing to this text is a fur-collared, high-hat-in-hand munitions maker paying his respects at the tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

None of the text and picture parallels are strained. One unfamiliar with the fables might be led to believe that they had been invented precisely for the situations portrayed in the accompanying lithographs, which speaks well both for the staying powers of Æsop's art and Gellert's capacity to make use of it.

Art Young recently remarked that radical artists were overlooking a bet in not more often tying up their political drawings with familiar proverbs and quotations from the Bible, Shakespeare, and so on, thus giving new edge to accepted messages. *Æsop Said So* would seem to be what Art Young ordered.

The lithographs rank among the best of Hugo Gellert's work. They are presented in an excellently designed volume. Its low price should find it a large market, in addition to the libraries of Gellert collectors. There will probably be a forgivable vandalism among the purchasers, who will tear out pages for mounting and framing. It should do well in the left-wing Christmas trade.

CROCKETT JOHNSON.

A Biography of Some Worth

KARL MARX: MAN AND FIGHTER, *by Boris Nikolaievsky and Otto Maenchen-Helfen. Lippincott.* $3.50.

A LIFE so active and a thought so rich and complex as that of Marx can never be definitively expounded. Changing events send us back to our sources for new suggestions and new clues towards the solution of present problems. It was thus that Lenin read and reread Marx and created a new body of Marxist interpretation and a new program of proletarian action.

Nikolaievsky and Maenchen-Helfen have written a readable and interesting book, in which for the first time is to be found a concise and detailed narrative of all of Marx's practical political activities, though from the theoretical side it has little to offer. The authors do not pretend to have analyzed and expounded Marx's economic and political teachings. Yet their own political position colors their treatment of Marx's life.

Nikolaievsky was a Menshevik who, after holding the position of head of the Historical-Revolutionary Records, fell afoul of the Bolsheviks and was imprisoned in 1921, finally to be banished from the Soviet Union. Since then he has been known largely for his book *Aseff the Spy.* Otto Maenchen-Helfen was a

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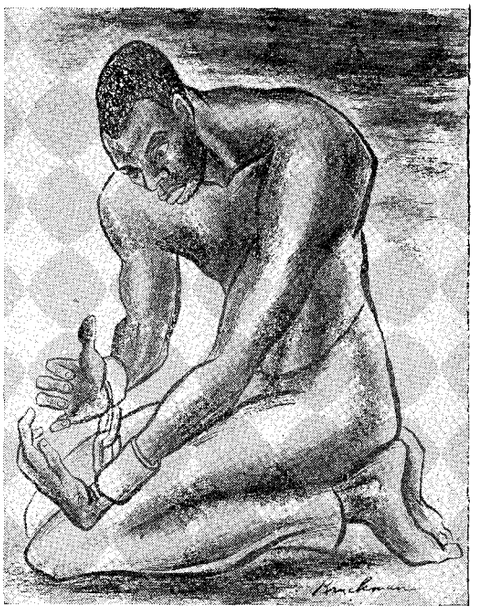
German Social Democrat who nevertheless finds it possible to live in fascist Vienna today. Four years ago he published in Berlin a bitter and unscrupulous attack on the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the leaders of the government, and the first Five Year Plan. He denounced German Communists for speaking of Russia as a workers' and farmers' state, citing as evidence against them the struggles over collectivization. "The Bolsheviks," he said, "fulfill their historical function ever more defectively. They are becoming an obstacle to the further development of Russia." And again, "In the Soviet Union there is no socialism, not even a despotic socialism. In 1921 one could speak of a despotic socialism. Today there reigns a boundless state capitalism. The will of the working masses counts for nothing, the will of the bureaucracy everything." It is scarcely to be expected, from the author's sentiments on the Soviet Union, that his interpretation of the life of Marx might not be colored thereby.

And so it is. The book discusses the question of the Gotha program of 1875, on the basis of which German Social Democracy was founded. In speaking of Marx's observations on the Gotha program, it ignores the main point of Marx's criticisms, viz., the transition from capitalism to socialism by means of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and then asserts that "a pure Marxist programme" was adopted at Erfurt in 1891. It fails to mention that these criticisms were published finally in 1891 by Kautsky only after Engels threatened to publish them himself, and constitute one of the fundamental works in Marxist literature, the *Critique of the Gotha Programme* on which Lenin's *State and Revolution* is based. The authors say, "Marx had made a mistake and recognized it," but do not say definitely what the mistake was that Marx admitted. Continually, too, the authors assert, as on page 379, "Marx issued no orders and set no patterns which the class war should follow. . . ." He abstained "from devising a plan of action that should be valid for all countries and all times." It is certainly true that Marx taught that the proletariat might gain power in different countries in different ways, but it was precisely the *general form* the holding of power during the transition to socialism would have to take, which he sought to formulate in *The Civil War in France* and the *Critique of the Gotha Programme,* that has been of utmost importance in Marxist theory since Lenin.

This example shows how the book is weighted on the side of traditional social-democratic theory. Much of it is good nevertheless. The new documents uncovered in recent years throw interesting light on several questions, notably those relating to the Russian influence on Prussia in the suppression of the *Rheinische Zeitung* and of Lassalle's correspondence with Bismarck. The chapter and sections dealing with Bakunin and Marx's struggles against him are thorough, well-documented, and exciting, as are many other portions of the work. Considering the standpoint of the authors it is perhaps just as well that they did not go further into the theoretical side of Marx's history, but the work necessarily suffers because of its thinness in this respect. Keeping all of these things in mind, and they are of utmost importance, the book still provides, for the reader who knows Marxist teachings and who wants merely a thorough survey of his practical activities, personality, and life in general, the most useful treatment that has yet been given.

STUART GREENE.



Herb Kruckman

The Truth About Mexico

THE STONES AWAKE, *by Carleton Beals. Lippincott.* $2.50.

MEXICO: A REVOLUTION BY EDUCATION, *by George I. Sánchez. Viking Press.* $2.75.

GOOD books about Mexico are so rare that we must welcome even a poor novel by Carleton Beals and give special praise to Dr. Sánchez. Beals ought to know better than to display in public his deep yearning to be an Artist, but under the circumstances we can do no more than take his book for what it is worth.

As a novel, *The Stones Awake* ranks with the more sophisticated popular thrillers. It has a fast-moving plot with shooting, rape, brawls, fornication, battles, Love, historic episodes, debauchery, heroism, etc. There is a colorful diversity of characters, Indian lore, and exotic color. Yet all this is on a superficial plane. Beals *explains* everything but he can't make us *feel* anything.

Nevertheless, *The Stones Awake* has its virtues. Beals understands Mexico, and so the story of serf-born Esperanza, of the struggles of her family and neighbors against the feudal landlord and his bullies, of their triumphs and defeats in the Revolution is historically convincing. He is sure of his ground when he describes the daily life of the Mexican peasant, the trickery of the priest, the vices and betrayals of the pseudo-revolutionary leaders. *The Stones Awake,* though obscured by the paraphernalia of fiction, is useful as a picture of true conditions in Mexico.

Beals might have prolonged his novel another chapter or two instead of bringing it to a close with Esperanza's return to her native village to teach school. Here was an opportunity for high-powered adventure, the Mexican schoolmistress frequently having to shoot it out with roving bands of "Cristeros," Catholic fanatics organized into a Mexican brand of vigilantes by the landlords, to destroy government schools.

Dr. Sánchez takes up the story where Beals leaves off. *Mexico: A Revolution by Education* is an especially timely and valuable book. No activity of the present Mexican government is more important or better illustrates its progressive tendencies than its educational program; at the same time, no phase of the constructive policies of President Cárdenas has been more misrepresented abroad.

Portraying the Mexican public school as an institution intimately related not only to the social, political, and economic realities of present-day Mexico but also to the whole cultural past of the nation, Dr. Sánchez is able to evaluate the rural school, the Indian boarding school, the Socialist school, and the various normal colleges in terms of the pressing needs of a backward country emerging from feudalism and groping for a sane national life.

With this broad perspective, he readily grasps the essential characteristic of Mexican education. The revolutionary school represents not merely a system of secular and rational (as opposed to religious) learning, but it is above all a practical, utilitarian institution that teaches the long-oppressed masses how to live, how to keep clean, how to prevent disease and organize against exploitation, how to better the material conditions which have caused misery and degradation.

It is hard to quibble with Dr. Sánchez over minor matters, so fair and sympathetic is his analysis of the revolutionary ideals of Mexico. He might have examined the meaning and significance of "Socialism," as applied to Mexican education, a little more closely; his interpretation of the Canabal and "Red Shirt" outrages is largely incorrect; he should have said something about the remarkable trade-union organizations of the teachers; and he does not point out with sufficient emphasis that the Cárdenas regime is largely responsible for the new vigor of Mexico's progressive school system.

On the other hand, his chapter on "Church, State, and Education" effectively disposes of the "religious" problem, so dear to uninformed liberals and to the reactionary enemies of Mexican democracy. He shows that the state has never interfered with the spiritual functions of the church, but has had to defend itself against the political activities of a domi-

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neering and rapacious clergy. Coming from the pen of Dr. Sánchez, a Catholic and a well-known educator of the State of New Mexico, these conclusions carry special weight.

CHARLES WEDGER.

The Technique of Warfare

THE WAR IN OUTLINE, *by Liddell Hart. Random House. $2.*
HOW TO RUN A WAR, *by Bruce Winton Knight. Knopf. $2.*
THE WAR OF THE GUNS, *by Aubrey Wade. Illustrated. Scribner's. $3.*

NOWHERE else in the literature of the World War can one find, in such brief compass and in such understandable language, an analysis of the military leaders and statesmen, their plans and operations, their successes and failures comparable to *The War in Outline.*

The "Great Delusion" of the war, in Liddell Hart's opinion, was the fact that military men considered themselves professionals; events proved them rank amateurs. As far as the staff officers were concerned, the author is convinced that civilians with administrative ability could quickly have taken their places. However, "it was far more difficult for him [the civilian] to become an efficient regimental officer" where highly specialized knowledge was required. "Generals," asserts the writer, "need to be truly general in their knowledge and understanding." Since the war the British army has come around to his views, as is shown in the latest edition of the British *Field Service Regulations,* summarizing the qualifications of a general as: "The broadest possible outlook and knowledge, of social as well as of military questions. War is now more than ever a social problem." World War generals did not measure up to this standard. General Charteris in his biography of Field Marshal Haig writes: "He took little interest in politics. . . . He had strangely little learning; his military work absorbed him, and he only glanced at other subjects, never studied them . . . he read few books and never a novel." Judging from Haig's record in the Passchendaele offensive, he never read military treatises either.

At the beginning of the war the "military minds of Europe had a too absorbing faith in one of Napoleon's sayings, so often contradictory, that victory lay with the 'big battalions.'" It led, says Liddell Hart, to a relative neglect of technical invention. Only the Germans, at the urging of Captain Hoffman, had paid much attention to the machine gun. The generals further misjudged the effect of improved weapons. There was unanimity that this strengthened the offensive and the offensive it started out to be; the Germans set a date by which to reach Paris and the French proposed to be in Berlin just as soon. But even the generals began to think when "the ominous shadow of the machine gun—'concentrated essence of infantry'—began to creep across the battlefield, bringing movement to a standstill." By November 11, 1914, "Defence had triumphed over attack." The war settled down to a gigantic mutual siege until overwhelming numbers, economic forces, and a really revolutionary weapon, the tank, came into play.

The "tanks" had been invented to overcome the defensive combination of machine guns, barbed wire, and trenches. At first the English army men ridiculed "the new and expensive toy" but eventually it was used, so prematurely, according to the author, as to lose much of its surprise value. The Germans considered the tank the most decisive weapon employed against them.

Naturally, in treating the whole war, Captain Hart has little space in 285 pages to tell the story of America's part. He errs in believing that Woodrow Wilson showed no intention of carrying America into the fray until after his reëlection. The famous sunrise conference, even if there were no other evidence, disproves it. He is on sounder soil when he quotes Gen. Peyton C. March to show that Pershing was a conventional, Haig-like soldier.

That the war makers at home do better than the generals is indicated in Prof. Bruce Winton Knight's ironic blueprint for the next war offered to the rulers of America, a blueprint based on experiences in the World War.

With razor-edged irony and annihilating satire, the lively professor charts the way, charts war causes, propaganda methods, and killing technique. Here are the detailed instructions on how the Hearsts, the du Ponts, the Mellons, the Morgans can get the country into war, round up their victims, make the poor pay for it all, and finally how they can compute their dividends. In this review we are going to sample his instructions on propaganda.

He analyzes the findings of Professor Lasswell, Lord Ponsonby, and others who have written on that subject. Perhaps the chief thing the Spanish fascists could learn from Professor Knight is that while "lies of astonishing size can be washed down by the right appeals," there should not be too much embroidery. "Propaganda must not be, like the output of the Ananias Club of Wisconsin, merely artistic." He then gives as illustration the story of the priests of Antwerp. When Antwerp fell a German paper reported that church bells were rung in Germany. The French paper, *Matin,* picked up the story and said that priests in Antwerp were forced to ring their own bells. Italian journalists, improving on *Matin,* said that Antwerp priests who refused to ring their own bells were sentenced to hard labor. Finally *Matin* wound up with patriotic priests of Antwerp being hung head-down in the bells and used as bell clappers.

Knight believes "It would have been better to stop the competition at just about the point where the priests were committted to

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penal servitude," in keeping with the propaganda law of plausibility. If the atrocity manufacturers for the Spanish fascists read this book they will undoubtedly learn that it is better to say that a dozen priests are crucified in a town of 50,000 than it is to say that 600 priests were so executed.

The War of the Guns is the rather pointless memoir of an English artilleryman in the World War. It has some historical value, including the description of the mining of Messines Ridge. For two years the author fired his gun at whatever he was told to aim at. The English guns were big and noisy; so were the German guns. Fired at each other, we got the war of the guns.

WALTER WILSON.

Sins and Synonyms

THE FRENCH QUARTER, *by Herbert Asbury. Alfred A. Knopf. $3.*

THE book is by the author of "Hatrack," *Up from Methodism, The Barbary Coast,* and *The Gangs of New York.* The subtitle is "An Informal History of the New Orleans Underworld." On the jacket a nineteenth-century prostitute smirks, or maybe leers, and points at the title, which swings on a sign. On the cover are reproduced drawings which will please those who are also pleased by revivals of ham plays in the Hoboken, or villain-hissing, tradition. Chapter headings are "La Creole S'Amuse," "Voodoo," "Some Loose Ladies of Basin Street." And so on.

On the whole the book itself lets you neither down nor, on the other hand, up. Mr. Asbury must have put a great deal of work into it; doubtless he has to make a living; and doubtless he enjoyed a lot of the work. Doubtless also, a good many other people will enjoy it, and they will include people to whom "slums" mean "low-life," and to whom "slums" and "low-life," particularly of the past (which somehow is always more "picturesque" and "colorful" than the present) are "amusing" or even "fascinating"; who relish synonyms like bagnio, bordello, etc.; and such wordage as "a troupe of ten exquisite strumpets." They will get vicarious pleasure out of accounts of brawls and murders and "case-histories" of prostitutes who happened to be especially "colorful." They will enjoy the feeling of being in the know as they read in some detail of the intimate relationships between vice and municipal politics. They will enjoy the feeling of getting a little ahead on their "Americana." All right, let them. In the course of adolescent revolt most middle-class boys of any intelligence, and some girls, go through such a phase, but those capable of maturity outgrow it young.

There are, however, a great many facts. You do get a pretty solid (though always "informal") history of corrupt politics and of "vice" in a city notable for both, from the year of its founding up to the War, and you get a great variety of "underworld" de-

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While the revolution in Spain demands first consideration in the field of foreign affairs, we shall not neglect other foreign countries—or our own. Recently, for example, we published a striking article by Robert Dell from Geneva in which he pointed an accusing finger at the foreign policies of England and France. In addition, Harold J. Laski wrote on the place of British labor in world affairs, and an anonymous English journalist discussed the political significance of Mrs. Simpson. Coming soon is an article by Sidney Webb, and a series of articles on American personalities who mold mass opinion over the air and on the printed page, and the conclusion of a symposium by leaders in public affairs on what they believe Roosevelt will do in the next four years.

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tail which, but for Mr. Asbury's work, you would have to work as hard as Mr. Asbury did to get; which wouldn't be by any means worth the trouble. And since such detail furnishes some light against which to candle the social egg, and since there is some usefulness in realizing in what essential ways the past was like, and unlike, the present, it is a book on which the head can be used. You will get neither help nor hindrance from the author in any serious quantities; the whole job is researched, thought out, and written in the tradition of the mid-twenties liberal literary journalist. The latter is not an entirely damnable character; but he is certainly not a particularly interesting one. Nor are his works. Nor are the people who enjoy them—beyond the fact that all three persist in our time. Indeed if the book has any "significance" at all, it is because its writing and publication presuppose the existence of a subsection of the sub-intellectuals of the middle class which is conditioned to enjoy what it offers and which is still numerous enough to support it. JAMES AGEE.

★

Also Published This Week

(A listing of important new books not necessarily recommended.)

365 Days, edited by Kay Boyle, Laurence Vail, Nina Conarain. Harcourt, Brace. $3. Brief stories, each pertaining to a news item during the year, by notable writers.

The Best of Art Young, with an introduction by Heywood Broun. Vanguard. $3. More than 200 drawings, with "review" by Art Young.

Brookings, by Hermann Hagedorn. Macmillan. $3.50. Biography of the founder of the institution.

The Sacrilege of Alan Kent, by Erskine Caldwell, with wood engravings by Ralph Frizzell. Falmouth House. $3. Prose saga of the South.

Reasons For Anger, by Robert Briffault. Simon & Schuster. $2.50. Essays.

Recently Recommended

Caleb Catlum's America, by Vincent McHugh. Illustrated by George T. Hartmann. Stackpole. $2.50. Tall tales with sociological overtones.

David and Joanna, by George Blake. Holt. $2. Scottish working-class novel.

The Yellow Spot: The Extermination of the Jews in Germany. Knight, Inc. $2. A documentary study with an introduction by the Bishop of Durham.

The Negro as Capitalist, by Abram L. Harris. The American Academy of Political and Social Science. $3.

More Poems, by A. E. Housman. Knopf. $2.

Lincoln Steffens Speaking. Harcourt, Brace. $2.50. A collection of Steffens's essays, sketches, etc.

Three Worlds, by Carl Van Doren. Harper. $3. Autobiography.

All Brides Are Beautiful, by Thomas Bell. Little, Brown. $2.50. Novel.

An American Testament, by Joseph Freeman. Farrar & Rinehart. $3. Autobiography. Book Union choice for October.

Calling Western Union, by Genevieve Taggard. Harper & Bros. New York. $2.

Brandeis, The Personal History of an American Ideal, by Alfred Lief. Stackpole. $3.

Spain in Revolt, by Harry Gannes and Theodore Repard. Knopf. $2.

World Politics, 1918-1936, by R. Palme Dutt. Regular Edition, Random House. $2.50. Popular Edition, International. $2.

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SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

The Philharmonic: personalities versus programs—The state of the ballet—Some new films

NEW YORK'S symphonic colossus strode across the musical scene this week with something less than its usual supreme assurance: no exceptional keenness of ear was required to detect a timid whimper of appeal above the customary fanfare with which the Philharmonic-Symphony Society opened its ninety-fifth season. Carried so long and so triumphantly on the narrow shoulders of Toscanini, the Society betrayed its lack of self-confidence last spring in its hasty roundup of no less than five new box-office supports. The compliment to Toscanini was a pretty one, but a flourishing one-man show cannot be converted into a flourishing five-ring circus over one summer. And, discounting the brief visits of Stravinsky, Chavez, and Enesco as those of the inevitable composer-conductor "guests," the Society's overlords are banking essentially on the powers of two minor luminaries. No attempt has yet been made (and it will be difficult to make it) to dress up the purely routine qualifications of Rodzinski, but while Barbirolli has only a very similar status in England, the almost complete unfamiliarity of his name to American concert-goers gave the publicity men their opportunity to build up a dark horse. And the best they have been able to do is to go back a few years for anecdotes of his talented youth and rise from 'cellist to conductor. There is little in his more recent career as an operatic and recording director to invest him in the desired glamour of stardom.

Learning little from experience, the New York Philharmonic-Symphony plays its old game: paying scant attention to its incredibly vast Sunday afternoon broadcast audience, utterly ignoring the increasingly serious problem of maintaining musical discipline in what is unquestionably the most talented and the most intractable body of orchestral musicians in the world, staking everything on a desperate attempt to hold its subscribers with a pretended all-star conductorial cast—each member of which is sold to the public as a "personality," with no more than passing reference to his talents as a musician or his ability to redeem the Philharmonic programs from their pitifully circumscribed and sterile repertory of recent years.

Yet despite the lack of logic or good musical sense to its plans, the season may succeed. Not of course, as hoped, on the basis of glamorous personalities (for even the dark horse, Barbirolli, is likely to make at best a pleasant rather than an exciting impression), but in the ignored field of program interest and freshness. Stravinsky, Chavez, and Enesco, with only a few concerts apiece and free from the necessity of packing them with standard works, are sure to choose stimulating music. And while Barbirolli's hands will be somewhat tied by his own awe at this sudden elevation to fame as well as by the overlords' restrictions, his excellent and catholic taste will inevitably be reflected to a considerable extent in the music he plays. His recent British recording repertory of popular war-horses and concerto accompaniments has been dictated by economic necessity. The programs of the chamber orchestra he organized some years ago give a better index to his musicianship. One can safely look to him for able performances of both old and new British works and of neglected Mozart and Haydn symphonies. He will, unless altogether intimidated, venture into the less conventional precincts of the standard symphonic repertory, and while he undoubtedly derives little personal pleasure from contemporary American music, he can be counted upon to give it not only fair representation, but what is more important, diligently prepared performances. The vital question of the orchestra's coöperation, made so problematical by the overlords' unwillingness to delegate complete authority to the conductor, will be settled, as always, behind the scenes. Barbirolli may be knifed like many another Philharmonic leader, but his freedom from conceit, the fact that he rose from the ranks himself, his sincerity and unquestioned musicianship are more likely to win him the respect and support of the players than they are to fulfill his employers' hope of a box-office sensation.

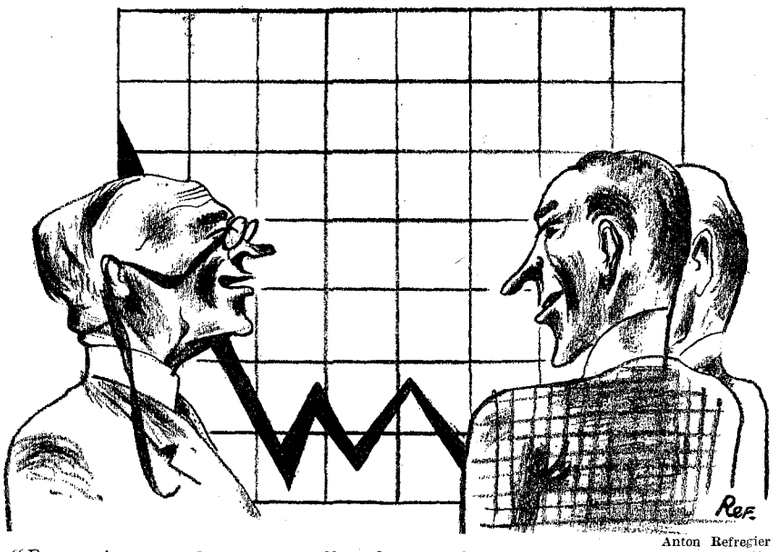
For the most part, however, the man in the street will still go elsewhere for good and interesting musical fare. The visiting Boston and Philadelphia orchestra's programs are still likely to be more inviting than the Philharmonic's, although Stokowski continues rapidly toward the obvious goal of playing nothing but his own transcriptions. His first concert gave us a *Boris Godunov* miscellany, but while Stokowski was one of the earliest to assist in throwing Rimsky-Korsakov's edition overboard, he has since succumbed to the same urge as Rimsky to correct poor Moussorgsky's "deficiencies." Instead of the straight *Ur-Boris,* we got a trade-marked Stokowski transcription forming what he describes as "something like a free modern symphony." We still want something more like Moussorgsky.

Happily the W.P.A. orchestras and the Cantata and other societies are going down to bedrock for Bach and other old works so seldom found in authentic form in the "name" orchestras' concerts. And the New Friends of Music bring a breath of fresh air into the chamber scene. Their Beethoven and Brahms series for this year not only enlist the services of some really first-rate ensembles and individual artists, but schedule many unfamiliar works and promise truthfully to live up to their almost too-good-to-be-true prospectus: "Artists have been chosen for their high standard of musicianship and not necessarily on the basis of their reputation. . . . By-products of concert-giving, such as exploitation of the artists' personality, display pieces, and encores, will have no place in the schedule. . . . [The New Friends of Music] will, we hope, encourage the development of audiences which will attend concerts for the sake of the works presented." It is fortunate for our nerves that we are never likely to be shocked by such a manifesto emanating from Carnegie Hall.

ROBERT D. DARRELL.

THE DANCE

THE ballet, both as a technique and a spectacle, has come in for some severe panning these last years, and not without reason. For one thing, here in America especially the ballet has been rather sterile, limited to



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nostalgia, reminiscence, tripe, and cheap vaudevillian antics; and no brilliance of technique to compensate in even small measure for a lack in choreographic skill or ingenuity. Second, the ballet has been the nurtured industry of the heavily perfumed émigrés and their patronizing confrères of Park Avenue plus; a sort of last line defense against a young and vigorous modern dance movement which has found no lack of choreographic substance in the modern scene. The American Ballet (American in name only, and by appropriation) is now safely quartered in the morgue which is the Metropolitan Opera House, seriously engaged with an *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and, I believe, *Grimm's Fairy Tales;* the moderns are concerned with *Imperial Gesture* (Martha Graham), *Lynch Town* (Charles Weidman), *Night Riders* (Tamiris), *Strange American Funeral* (Anna Sokolow to Mike Gold's poem), etc.

Considering that the dance is being reclaimed more and more by the masses who have no patience for romantic dawdlings nor knowledge of nor sympathy for petty-bourgeois tabloid, there's no need for further exposition on the current disfavor of the ballet, imported, domestic, or hybrid.

However, the ballet is neither dead nor intends to be buried.

The Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo (an expatriate group of Russians with a good mixture of English, German, Polish, and American ballerinas) opened their American season with three ballets New York had not seen previously, and the Ballet Caravan (an offshoot of the American Ballet) contributed no less than five new ballets to the cause; and not completely without effect.

The Ballet Russe offered Lichine's *Le Pavillon* (set to Borodin's music), which was rather ineffectual, sentimental nonsense about the poet who finally keeps his tryst with love despite the evil spirits. Massine's choreographic *Symphonie Fantastique* (music and book by Berlioz), however, had some excellent spots: a fast-moving "Ball," and some well-executed mass movement in a rather theatrical prison scene. The ballet is concerned with the hallucinations of the opium-drunk composer, and lends itself to the showmanship for which Massine has no little flair.

Massine is also responsible for the third of the new Ballet Russe productions, *Cimarosiana,* which was presented too late for comment in this review.

As to the Ballet Caravan, its indulgence in the classic technique may be pleasing to whichever eye it is that prefers delicate and meaningless gesture (the girls are pretty), but scarcely more. *Promenade* is concerned with the various walks of the various Greek gods (Venus and Adonis, Apollo and Daphne, etc.); *The Soldier and the Gypsy,* a pantomimic version (and a poor one) of the Mérimée story and the Bizet opera, *Carmen; Encounter,* a pleasant bit of hide and seek; *Pocahontas,* the traditional Powhatan, John Smith, Rolfe story; and *Harlequin for President,* another Columbine episode.

The ballet may eventually pull out of its slough and present itself as a technique capable of significant creation. Right now, it's still playing blind-man's buff, and grown pretty stale and stiff at it; and the only dance with any real meaning for the people is the work being done by the modern school—of which much more with the season.

OWEN BURKE.

THE SCREEN

THOUGH Paul Czinner and his staff have leaned backward (as did the late Irving Thalberg) to preserve Shakespeare, *As You Like It* (20th Century-Fox) is essentially an exhibition of the director-producer's wife, Elisabeth Bergner. As Rosalind, Miss Bergner is able to shed tears one moment and laugh with abandon the next; she is able to flit around from tree to tree, pucker her lips, swing her arms, and sigh. As a matter of fact the role is tailor-made, for she can display every emotion and trick in the Bergner catalogue. As a result, two of the most important roles, Jacques and Touchstone, have been terrifically understated. This in spite of the fact that Miss Bergner claims to have made the film with "love and reverence" for the Bard.

On the other hand this "love and reverence" which kept the beautiful poetry exact, and Dr. Czinner's limitations as a director of cinema in the creative sense have made *As You Like It* more enjoyable than Warner's *Midsummer Night's Dream* which claims to be a cinematic translation of the play but succeeds (in the formal sense) in being for the most part a pretentious stage production in celluloid. At least nothing in *As You Like It* gets in the way of the recitation of the lines. Its simplicity is its chief virtue and it should definitely be on the list of films you should see.

Last year's *La Maternelle* and *Crime et Chatiment* and this season's *La Kermesse Héroique* and *Les Miserables* are plenty of proof that the French film industry is displaying amazing vitality. And now Jean Renoir's *Toni* (renamed for the United States *The Loves of Toni*), which can be seen at the 55th Street Playhouse, will bring additional prestige to the new French cinema. Though the scenario is based on a rural police case and the film has a "plot," *Toni* is a documentary film in the broadest definition of that term. It was photographed near Marseilles, and the story has been conceived and developed from the lives of the farmers and workers in the region. There is nothing militant about the plot, but it does have a class point of view. That is what gives the film its authentic folk and documentary quality.

There is Toni's (an emigrant Italian worker) affair with his landlady, Marie, and later his falling in love with Josepha, a young Spanish girl. There is Josepha's seduction by Albert and her marriage to him and her child and the unhappy marriage. There is Toni's unhappy marriage with Marie and her attempt to commit suicide when she sees that Toni

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can't forget Josepha. Finally there is Albert's unpremeditated murder by his wife and Toni's sacrificial shooting by the police. There is enough material here to manufacture a dozen gory sensational melodramas. But Renoir has kept his film on an honest, beautiful, and intense level.

Olympic Ski Champions, a Pete Smith short released by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, is a German film in spite of the denials by the distributors. In the first place it contains the official Olympic Games photography and a German score. Finally it is a beautiful example of brilliant cutting. Only one man outside of the Soviet Union could have executed such a job: Walter Ruttman, who will be remembered for his silent documentary *Berlin.* It is a further illustration of the decay of the arts under fascism. Ruttman's possibilities as an honest artist have been so curbed that he (like others) turned to the purely formal aspects of his craft. But the cinema (like the other arts) will starve on a diet of form without content. At the Rialto you will find a newsreel compilation called *The Spanish Civil War.* Not only is it dull and badly cut, but it is a fake. For the capture of Irun by the rebels the producers have cut in a sequence from the British war film *The Battle of Gallipoli* directed by Anthony Asquith. It is amazing that an exhibitor of Mr. Mayer's intelligence should fall for such slimy opportunism.

PETER ELLIS.

★

The Radio

(Times given are Eastern Standard, but all programs listed are on coast-to-coast hookups. Readers are asked to report at once any anti-working-class bias expressed by these programs or their sponsors.)

FORTHCOMING BROADCASTS

Social Security. The "People's Panel" will broadcast views of twelve "average citizens" on this subject Sun., Nov. 15, at 10 p.m., Inter-City network.

Student Conference on Peace. Sat., Nov. 14, 10 p.m., N.B.C. red.

Poetry. Several speakers in a symposium. Tues., Nov. 17, 4 p.m., N.B.C. blue.

What Price Peace? Salvador de Madariaga, James G. McDonald, and others, Thurs., Nov. 19, 9:30 p.m., N.B.C. blue.

Theodore Dreiser, Margaret Sullavan, and others, in the "magazine of the air," Wed., Nov. 18, 11 a.m., Columbia.

REGULAR FEATURES

Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, John Barbirolli conducting. Sundays at 3 p.m., Columbia.

Philadelphia Orchestra, Stokowski conducting, Fridays at 10 p.m., Columbia.

Beethoven Sonata Series. Alexander Semmler, pianist. Sundays at 10:30 a.m., Columbia.

Seattle Symphony Orchestra, with Cameron conducting, Thursdays at 8 p.m.. Columbia.

Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Barlow conducting. Sundays at 3 p.m., Columbia.

Fred Astaire and Johnny Green's Orchestra. Tuesdays at 9:30 p.m., N.B.C. red.

Waring's Pennsylvanians, Tuesday at 9 pm., rebroadcast to West Coast at midnight, Columbia.

André Kostelanetz's Orchestra. Wednesdays at 9 p.m. and Fridays at 8:30 p.m., Columbia.

Rudy Vallée's Varieties. Thursdays at 8 p.m., N.B.C. blue.

"Your Hit Parade," Saturdays at 10 p.m., Columbia.

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Raymond Gram Swing, commenting on international affairs. Fridays at 9 p.m., Mutual.

The March of Time. Thursdays at 10:30 p.m., Columbia.

The Screen

WORTH SEEING

As You Like It. Elisabeth Bergner as a light-footed Rosalind.

The Loves of Toni (55th Street, N.Y.). A French film with a class understanding.

Nightingale, the Soviet Union's first film in color. Cameo. N. Y.

Millions of Us, a fine labor short. Watch for it in your locality.

Nine Days a Queen. Nova Pilbeam and Cedric Hardwicke in a film about Lady Jane Grey.

Carnival in Flanders (*La Kermesse Héroique*—Filmarte, 202 W. 58th St., N.Y.). A prize-winning French film that's good fun.

The Theater

IMPORTANT OPENINGS

Johnny Johnson (44th Street, N.Y., Tues., Nov. 17), the season's first production by the Group Theatre, by Paul Green. Kurt ("Dreigroschenoper") Weill wrote the music.

Two Hundred Were Chosen (48th Street. N. Y., Fri., Nov. 20). E. P. Conkle's play about the Alaskan "resettled" group, with Will Geer.

THUMBS UP

It Can't Happen Here, Sinclair Lewis's anti-fascist novel dramatized by the W.P.A., at the following theaters: Adelphi, N. Y.; Jefferson, Birmingham, Ala.; Mayan and Figueroa (Yiddish), Los Angeles; Columbia, San Francisco; Baker, Denver; Park, Bridgeport, Conn.; Palace, Hartford, Conn.; Blackstone, Chicago; Keith, Indianapolis; Repertory, Boston; Lafayette, Detroit; City, Newark, N. J.; Warburton, Yonkers, N. Y.; Carter, Cleveland; Moore, Seattle; Scottish Rite, Tacoma.

Gilbert & Sullivan (Martin Beck, N.Y.). The Rupert D'Oyly Carte company in superlative production of the Savoy operettas. *The Gondoliers,* which will continue through Saturday, Nov. 14, will be followed by a week's run of *Pinafore.*

Hamlet (Imperial, N.Y.). Leslie Howard's somewhat unconventional but impressive version.

Hamlet (Empire, N.Y.). John Gielgud as the Dane, plus Lillian Gish, Judith Anderson, and Arthur Byron.

Tovarich (Plymouth, N.Y.). Slightly slanderous but very entertaining comedy with a swell cast, including a newcomer, Marta Abba.

The Art Galleries

Anti-War Art. A showing of five centuries' work along this line, sponsored by the American Artists Congress and the Artists Union of Chicago, opening at the Michigan Square Building, Chicago, Nov. 21. The cost of the show will be defrayed by an art auction at Lincoln Center, 700 Oakwood Blvd., Chicago, Saturday evening, Nov. 14.

Elias Goldberg. Seventeen oils, Another Place, 43 West 8th St., N.Y.

Judson Briggs. Twenty-four oils, Uptown Gallery, 249 West End Ave., N.Y.

Tromka. Oils and drawings, A.C.A. Gallery, 52 West 8th St., N.Y.

Brooklyn Museum. A special showing of six Americans: Brook, du Bois, Kroll, Sheeler, Sloan, Flanagan.

American Artists School. An exhibition of photographs by Margaret Bourke-White and Ruth Rozaffy opens Mon., Nov. 16.

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